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# THE HISTORY OF INDIAN COSTUME FROM THE 3RD CENTURY A.D. TO THE END OF THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.

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## I.

"In the life of a man the first and foremost are food and clothing. To man these two are fetters and chains which bind him to the field of rebirth."

The period before the advent of the Guptas covers roughly the history of India from the date of the extinction of the Imperial Kuṣāṇas and the emergence and consolidation of the power of the Yaudheyas in eastern Pañjāb and Rājputānā, the Nāgas of Pawāya, the Bhāraśivas and the Maghas, etc., who dominated the scene for a considerable time till the rise of the Gupta empire.

The material for the study of Indian costume in this period of disintegration is small as few monuments with the sumptuous reliefs of the Sāñci and Amarāvati type datable to this period have survived. The so-called Kuṣāṇa sculptures of Mathurā could be helpful for a study of the culture of this period, but the nomenclature Kuṣāṇa applied to these sculptures is inaccurate as it vaguely refers to a period which lasted for more than two hundred years. The period of the early Kuṣāṇas was no doubt rich in artistic efforts, but there is no reason to believe that art did not flourish in the interregnum after the break-up of the Kuṣāṇa power and the rise of the Guptas. The matter as it stands, however, compels us for the sake of accuracy to exclude

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1. I-ling. Tr. Takakazu, p. 72.

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the bulk of the so-called Kuṣāṇa sculptures of Mathurā from the scope of our discussion in the present paper.

In the Telugu country in the south, however, the 3rd century reliefs from the stūpa at the village Goli in Pālnad Tāluk, Guṇṭūr district, have survived. These reliefs are important documents for the study of Indian costume, though it may be admitted that the costumes in the south had not undergone any considerable change since the earlier days of Amarāvati and Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. The naturalistic treatment of the Goli reliefs stands in direct contrast with the Pallava reliefs of the Tāmil land in so far as the latter are rather conventional in the treatment of drapery: hence their utility in the history of costume in Southern India is of doubtful value. The reliefs from Pawāya in Gwālior State, from the stylistic point of view, could be compared with the later reliefs of the Amarāvati stūpa and also the 3rd century reliefs of Goli. The representations of the costume in these reliefs give details of certain local variations which have been recorded in this article.

The most interesting period from the point of the history of Indian costume, however, is the Gupta period. There is ample material in the form of sculptures from Sārnāth, Deogarh, Gwālior, Maṇḍor, etc., and the Ajanṭā paintings, especially of Cave XVII, though strictly speaking Ajanṭā lay in the domains of the Vākāṭakas and hence the appellation Gupta may not be very happy. These, together with the sculptures and terracottas give us a tolerably good picture of Indian costumes and textile materials roughly from the end of the 3rd century to the end of the Seventh.

The Gupta dynasty was founded by Candragupta I (320-335 A.D.), but it was strengthened by Samudragupta (335-385 A.D.), one of the ablest and most versatile rulers India has ever known. Besides his many conquests, with which we are not concerned, he was a man of literary taste and a poet and musician. His son and successor was Candragupta Vikramāditya (385-413 A.D.) who conquered the Western Satraps between 395 and 400 A.D. The Gupta state consolidated by Samudragupta by his conquests became highly organised, as the Gupta seals from Basārḥ and Rājghāt show. Kumāragupta's period (414-455 A.D.) was marked by the gradual decadence of the empire which closed one of the glorious chapters of Indian history after the terrific



onslaught of the Hūṇas in the time of Skandagupta (455-470 A.D.). From his Bhitari inscription it is evident that by his military achievements against the Hūṇas (about 455 A.D.) Skandagupta was able to save the empire temporarily. With his death, however, the glories of the dynasty came to an end. After Skandagupta a number of Gupta princes are known from the coins and inscriptions, whose contributions from the historical point of view are not much. According to Yuan Chwang the Hūṇas, who seemed to have established a temporary sway over the Gupta domain, were defeated by Bālāditya. This achievement is also claimed by Yaśodharman, a powerful king in an inscription dated 533 to 534 A.D.

From the cultural point of view the age of the Guptas is rightly regarded as the golden age of Indian history.

The Guptas were worshippers of Śiva and Viṣṇu and the ancient Vedic religion was revived; but Buddhism received equal recognition.

The period of Śrī Harṣa should also be included in the cultural history of the Gupta period. In this period Bāṇa, Yuan Chwang and other writers throw considerable light on certain aspects of Indian culture which are not mentioned in the works of Kālidāsa, the greatest poet of the Gupta age.

✓ It is not only in the political, religious and artistic sphere that the Gupta age excelled, but material culture also attained a high level. This may be gathered from the works of Kālidāsa, the paintings of Ajantā and other archaeological remains. In the dazzling harem scenes at Ajantā even the smallest details of the equipment of the ancient Indian palaces are shown. The noble figure of the king simply but elegantly dressed, the voluptuous female attendants serving the king in accordance with the strict royal etiquette, the more discretely dressed dancers and musicians, the elegant royal processions accompanied by a body of well-equipped troops, all these aspects of kingly life show the achievements of the Gupta age in the sphere of material culture. The fashions in hair-dressing, costumes, and ornaments are different from the somewhat barbaric fashions in the preceding centuries. The women in this period do not follow the old style of wearing their hair in plaits; the hair is dressed in almost limitless varieties, in which the hands of expert hairdressers are visible. In the mode



of wearing the 'dhoti' or 'sāri' the artistic arrangements of pleats and folds prove that the wearers were not unaware of the aesthetics of dressing. Such was the importance of dressing properly that the act is indicated by five words in Sanskrit, namely, 'ākālpa, veśa, nepathya, pratikarma' and 'prasādhana'.<sup>1</sup> Also in textile designs the Gupta period had achieved much as is evidenced by the literary references and the designs on the clothings in the Ajanṭā paintings, to be described later on.

For the study of Indian costume in the Gupta period, besides sculptures and paintings in Cave XVII at Ajanṭā, we have a large number of coins portraying the Gupta kings. A very significant fact in the costume of the kings is that they wear tunics, trousers and coats, after the fashion of the Kuṣāṇa kings, though they also appear in purely national costume. It shows that they had adopted both types of costume in the same way as a westernised Indian of to-day goes to attend office or a social function in European dress for the sake of convenience, while at home he wears his own costume. This is true not only in the case of Indians but other Asiatics as well. The convenience and also the elegant cut of sewn garments must have appealed to the highly artistic, but at the same time practical, Guptas. Commonsense in the sphere of dress is also evident in the change from thick woollen or padded materials of the Kuṣāṇa costumes to thin and at times diaphanous materials which suited very well the climatic conditions of the country. The coarseness, the heavy and barbaric cut of the Kuṣāṇa garments gave way to elegance and finish.

The foreign elements in the matter of sewn garments were quickly assimilated and the emerging garments were truly Indian in form. For example, as evident from the Kuṣāṇa sculptures and coins, the kings wore very heavy top-boots, very ugly in appearance but very convenient for a cold climate, and specially useful when riding horses. In the Gupta period the top-boots lose their heaviness and are reduced to the shape of modern riding boots.

The introduction of sewn garments in India on an extensive scale—though it must be admitted that the Indians knew of sewn garments from very early times—influenced to a certain extent the costumes of those who

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1. 'Amarakosa,' II, 8, 70.



came in intimate contact with the court. The first to be affected were the servants, both male and female. Their well-cut tunics, and at times shorts, show the royal taste in the livery of personal servants. It has been often argued that perhaps many of the servants wearing sewn garments were foreigners in the employment of the Indian kings. This is true in the case of a minority; the majority of them were definitely Indians. The descriptions of servants, maid-servants, etc., by Bāṇabhaṭṭa—in his works discussed elsewhere—prove it.

The import of female slaves from foreign countries was a practice which existed much before the advent of the Gupta power in India. It is mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (circa 1st century A.D.) that among the costly imports from the foreign countries at Barygaza (ancient Bharukaccha or modern Broach) for the use of the kings were costly vessels of silver, singing boys and beautiful maidens for the harem.<sup>1</sup> The practice of importing foreign slaves is corroborated by Jain sources which can be dated before the Gupta period. A list of the foreign slaves is given in the 'Antagaḍadasāo'.<sup>2</sup> The story says that in his boyhood Prince Goyame was attended by female slaves of various nationalities—Babbara<sup>3</sup>, Pausaya (Bausi)<sup>4</sup>, Greeks (Joṇiya), Palhaviya (Parthians), Iṣinaya (Isini), Dhoruṇigini, Lāsiya, Lausiya, Dravidian (Damidi), Sinhalese (Simphali), Ārabi (Arab), Pulinda, Pakkaṇi<sup>5</sup>, Bahali (Bactrian), Murandi (Murunda), Sabara and Persians (Pārasīhi). These women of diverse lands were in foreign garbs ('videsa-parimaṇḍiyāhi') with raiments taken from their own countries' fashions ('sadesa-nevatthagahiya-vesāhi'), understanding from gesture what was thought and

1. Schott, *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, p. 42.

2. Tr. by L.D. Barnett, London, 1907, pp. 28-29. The list is repeated in the *Nāyādharmma-Kaṇḍo*, I, 20.

3. It is difficult to identify all the countries in the above list. The Babbara land probably indicated North Africa and is mentioned by the *Periplus* whose Berbers probably included the ancestors of the Beja between the Nile and the Red Sea, the Danakils between the Upper Nile, Abyssinia and the Gulf of Aden and the Somalis and Gallas (Schott, loc. cit. pp. 5, 6). According to the *Periplus* slaves were often exported from the Berber country (ib., p. 25).

4. Pausaya or Vausaya may be the slaves from the Oxus countries.

5. The Pakkaṇa may be identified with the Prakaṇva mentioned as a counter example to Prakaṇva in *Pāṇini* (VI, 1, 133) and is stated by 'Kāśikā' to be the name of a country. Dr. Vasudera-Saran (*J. U. H. S.*, Vol. XVI, P. 1, p. 28) suggests its identification with the people mentioned by Herodotus as Parikantoi, i.e., the inhabitants of modern Persians (Sten Konow, *Corpus of Kharosthi Inscriptions*, p. XVIII).



desired of them ('iṅgiya-cintiya-patthiya-viyanīyāhi'). They were skilful, accomplished and well-trained ('viniyāhi')<sup>1</sup>. This description of the foreign female slaves shows them in Indian harems in the early centuries of the Christian era. There is no reason to believe that in the Gupta age things were different, and though there is no mention of as many geographical designations of the slaves as in the 'Antagaḍa' and 'Nayādhammakahāo', Yavanīs as personal attendants of the kings in Kalidāsa's dramas are frequently mentioned. Perhaps the term Yavana in this age had lost its original significance and was used to designate all foreigners.

The influence of the costumes of these slaves in dictating the fashions of the period must have been considerable, at least on the costumes of the servant class, and the paintings of Ajantā testify to it. But it would be wrong to say that the foreign costumes were introduced to this country through slaves only. As a matter of fact military invasion and consequent occupation of a considerable part of the country by the Sakas and the Kuṣāṇas as well as commercial intercourse which necessitated the visits of foreign merchants to India and the greater influx of Buddhist pilgrims from Central Asia and the borderlands must have to some extent exercised an influence on the evolution of foreign types in the costumes of India. To such foreign influences, probably of the Sakas, are due the hemispherical and cone-shaped caps with streamers, tunics with V-shaped openings at the neck and full riding boots. The story of this invasion of foreign elements into Indian costume may be read in the wall paintings of Ajantā, in which we actually see the process of Indianisation in the shapes and colours of the foreign costumes. Eclecticism in the Gupta age was not confined to art and religion only; it also extended to costume.

This predilection for foreign types in the Gupta age stands comparison with the change of Indian costume in the Mughal period. The Mughals, the inhabitants of Central Asia, brought their own costume, which in the course of time adapted itself to Indian conditions and became the standard costume of the period, both of the State servants, officers, grandees, and also of the inhabitants of the cities, such as

1. 'Antagaḍa', p. 20, and 'Nāyā', i. 90.



bankers, merchants and the shopkeepers. 'Jāmah', trousers, turban and 'kamarband' became articles of universal wear irrespective of caste or creed. In the Kuṣāṇa period an analogous process of transformation of the costume was taking place, though on a much lesser scale, with the king setting the example to his Indian followers. Complete transformation could not be achieved, for at that time there was no enforcement of a standard uniform, and also because of the natural apathy of the vast majority of Indians to innovations as far as food and costume are concerned. The Guptas who inherited the cultural legacy of the Kuṣāṇas saw the practical and aesthetic value of the Kuṣāṇa costume, and adopted it with certain changes. There was, however, no question of compulsion, and hence the foreign types were only confined to those who liked them. The vast majority of the people continued to wear their ancient garments, cool and comfortable for a hot climate.

Another very interesting point with regard to the costume of the Gupta period is the uniform of the soldiers. At Ajaṇṭā one section of the soldiers goes in 'dhoti', but the soldiers of other sections wear tunics, trousers or shorts, top-boots, and their hair is held together with ribbons and scarves—a very convenient military uniform. In the centuries preceding the Gupta age, except occasionally, in the Śātavāhana age, there was no fixed uniform for the army, the overwhelming majority of the soldiers going in 'dhoti'. The introduction of a military uniform in the Gupta period seems to have been based on the Kuṣāṇa prototype. The Guptas were great fighters and for their conquests they had to depend on an efficiently trained army, well clad and well equipped. The practical utility of the new uniform must have appealed to their commonsense and hence the emergence of a smartly turned out national army. This change as already mentioned might have been effected in the model organisation and equipment of the Kuṣāṇa army which held its sway practically over the whole Pañjāb and U.P., or it might have been due to the practical lessons learnt in campaigning against the Hūnas. It is however difficult to be definite on this point.

Coming to history again, an important dynasty contemporary with the Guptas was that of the Vākātakas. In the first half of the fifth century the Vākāṭaka kingdom lying between the Gupta empire and the kingdom of the south had become the dominant power in the Deccan.

Military Uniform.



The Vākātakas in their time became the intermediaries of Northern Indian culture and the South. The dynasty disappeared in the middle of the sixth century. The presence of Vākātaka inscriptions at Ajanṭā is an important factor in the chronology of Indian art. The history of the Deccani costume could be traced from these cave paintings, and when compared with the Gupta costume in the north as depicted in the sculptured reliefs and coins leads us to believe that the standard Gupta costume had penetrated to the Deccan, and except for a few local variations it was the same all over India.

The rapid collapse of the Hūnas in Northern India and the failure of the Gupta power to re-establish its former glories permitted the appearance of a number of new dynasties, including those of Valabhi, the Cālukyas, the Maukhāris, the later Guptas and especially the Yādhanas of Thāneśvar, destined to play an important part in history. The most glorious period in the 7th century is that of Śrī Harṣa (605-647 A. D.), who was a great administrator, a man of culture and the author of several Sanskrit dramas; at his court flourished Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa, the king's biographer. Harṣa's great contemporary was Pulakeśin II to whose period may be assigned Caves I and II of Ajanṭā. To the same period belong the wall paintings at Bagh in Gwalior State. These paintings are a treasure house of the manners and customs of 7th century India.

The visits of Yuan Chwang and I-tsing also supply us with ample sociological information about India of the 7th century. The Chinese pilgrims have invariably given some description of the costumes of the people. Together with the literary information to be had from the works of Bāṇa a fairly satisfactory picture of the costumes and manners of the people of the 7th century could be drawn. An unexpected source of information is available in the Bhāgyas and the commentaries of certain Jain 'Cheda-sūtras', the most notable being the 'Bṛhat-Kalpa-sūtra Bhāgya.' The nature of the information is so interesting that it has been recorded in a separate section.

It is one of the perquisites of fashionable society that its members should be well dressed, and for that, rich and artistic materials, printed, painted, coloured, richly patterned and of fine texture are always in great demand. Both the ladies and gentlemen belonging to Gupta society used the finest materials for their clothing. The art of calico printing seems



to have received a great impetus; the chequers, stripes, and swans, etc., which are the most favourite patterns in the Gupta age later on became traditional patterns of the calico printers.

That there was a great improvement in the textile craft and silk weaving in the Gupta period is evident from their descriptions in the 'Amarakoṣa.' here are stray references to textile materials in the literature of the period, and somewhat conventional descriptions are found in the travel accounts of the Chinese pilgrims. To get an adequate idea of the textile materials of that period all the information from the travel books, literature, dictionaries, etc., however scrappy they may be, have to be put together.

Unfortunately there are few Sanskrit works which give us a correct appraisal of the social conditions under which the people lived, what they ate, how they dressed and how they amused themselves. For such information one has to depend entirely on occasional references, which are often scrappy and conventional in treatment. On the 7th century costumes, however, the works of Bāṇa throw full light. Nothing escaped his penetrating eyes and so developed was his descriptive power that it did not overlook even the minutest details. The lexicons, especially the 'Amarakoṣa,' are also important for the study of costume and textile materials in the Gupta age.

The 'Amarakoṣa' contains certain interesting information about the costume and the textile materials of the Gupta age, though the terms are not always clearly explained and the commentaries are also far from illuminating. According to Amarasimha the textile materials are divided in the following four classes: (1) 'Valka' (made from bark fibres), which includes 'Kṣauma', etc.; (2) 'Phāla' (made from fibrous fruits) and which includes cotton and plants of the same order; (3) 'Kauśeya' (silk), and (4) 'Rāṅkava' (made from the hair of a goat). Rāṅkava needs some explanation. The word formed from the noun 'raṅku' is usually explained by the commentators as a kind of woollen cloth manufactured from the hair of the 'raṅku' deer or some other species of wild animal. The lexicographers and the commentators were not at all sure about

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1. Amara, II, 6. 111.



the origin of the word. There is, however, a natural explanation for the 'rāṅkava' variety of woollen cloth. There is a species of goat called 'rang' which flourishes in the steppes of the high Pāmīr plateau. It affords a very fine shawl-wool<sup>1</sup>. This 'rang' goat is probably the same as the 'raṅku' of Sanskrit literature about whose exact counterpart in the animal kingdom the lexicographers are not sure. If the proposed identification of 'raṅku' with 'rang' goat be correct then the 'Rāṅkava' would mean a fine variety of 'pashmīna' cloth probably manufactured in the Pāmīr region. As mentioned in the Mahābhārata, felts<sup>2</sup> were also manufactured from the fine wool of the 'raṅku' goat.

After this classification the 'Amarakoṣa' describes the various stages in the manufacture of cloth right from the loom to the finishing and calendering stages. For the cloth fresh from the loom the following words have been used: 'anāhata' (uncalendered), 'niṣpravāṇi' (fresh from the loom), 'tantraka' (woven on the loom) and 'navāmbara'<sup>3</sup>. After the cloth was bleached it was known as 'udgamanīya'<sup>4</sup>.

In the 'Bṛhat-Kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya' ( III, 2996 ) the following is the process in preparing the cotton for spinning. The 'seḍuga' cotton after the seeds were removed was carded ( piñjita ) and from the clean cotton spools ( pelu ) were prepared for spinning.

The process of washing clothes is described in the 'Nāyādhammakahāo' ( III, 60 ). First the cloth was put into a solution of soda ( 'vattham sajjiyā-khāreṇam anulimpai' ), then boiled and finally washed with fresh water. An analogous process in washing clothes is still maintained by the 'dhobis', though soap is gradually replacing the crude soda as washing medium.

One of the varieties of silk is called 'patroṇa' in the 'Amarakoṣa'. Perhaps it was some kind of wild silk. Kṣīrasvāmī, a commentator of the 'Amarakoṣa'<sup>5</sup> calls it silk spun by the insects feeding on the leaves

1. Wood, 'A Journey to Orus,' New Ed., 1872 ; 'Introductory Essay' by Yule, p. LVII, see also 'Bhāratīya Vidyā', Vol. I, 1, p. 46, fn. 1.

2. 'Rāṅkava-kata, III, 225, 9, BORI ed.

3. 'Ak.', II, 6, 112.

4. Ib.

5. Amarakoṣa, ed. by Dr. Haradatta, p. 157.



of banyan and 'lakuca' (a kind of bread or fruit tree, 'Artocarpus lakucha'). Costly bleached silk is known as 'mahādhana'.

While talking of silk one should not forget to mention the varieties of silk technically called 'kiḍaya' by Devardhigaṇi who lived in the middle of the fifth century<sup>1</sup>. Under the heading 'kiḍaya' or silk-worm products he mentions the following varieties: 'malaya', 'amśuka', 'cīnāmśuka' and 'kṛmirāga'. The above varieties and some more are explained in the 'Bṛhat-Kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya'. 'Paṭṭa' according to the commentary of the above 'Bhāṣya' was woven from the 'paṭṭa' yarn, presupposing thereby that 'paṭṭa' was a certain kind of silk yarn<sup>2</sup>. 'Amśuka' is explained in the commentary as smooth and shining silk ('ślakṣṇapaṭṭaḥ') and 'Cīnāmśuka' was either cocoon silk ('kośikārākhyah-kṛmiḥ tasmājjātam') or Chinese silk ('cīnānāma janpadaḥ tatra yaḥ ślakṣṇatarapaṭaḥ tasmājjātam'). It seems that the Chinese silk was made from very smooth silk yarn. The 'kṛmirāga' as its name indicates was the silk dyed in red colour prepared from an insect called kermes or Coccus Indicus. The Malaya silk was perhaps the product of Malabar or South Bihar. The 'suvarṇa' silk is described by the commentator as golden coloured silk, the thread being spun by a particular variety of silk-worms.

'Dukūla' according to Amarasimha was a synonym of 'kṣauma' (linen) and the linen covers were known as 'nivṛta' and 'prāvṛta'. It seems that at some later date all thin bleached materials were being classified as 'dukūla'. The 11th century commentator of the 'Ācārāṅga-sūtra' however, explains 'dukūla' as cloth made from the cotton grown in Gauḍa.

The 'Amarakoṣa' also gives words denoting the measurements of cloth. The cloth ends or hems are known as 'daśā' and 'vasati', the

1. Ak., II, 6, 113.

2. 'Anuyogadvāra Sūtra', 37.

3. 'Bṛhat.' Vol. IV, 3661.

4. Ak. II, 6, 112.

5. See the commentary of Mallinātha, 'Raghuvamśa', I, 60.

6. 'Ācārāṅga-sūtra', II, 5, 4.



length as 'dairghya', 'āyāma' and 'āroha' and the breadth as 'parināha' and 'visālata'.

The various stages in the wear and tear of the cloth after constant use have been expressed by several words. Old worn out clothes are known as 'pataccara' and 'jirṇa-vastra' and damaged and dirty clothes are known as 'naktaka' and 'karpata'.

Clothes in general were known by the following six words: 'vastra', 'ācchādana', 'vāsaḥ', 'caila', 'vasana' and 'amśuka'. For costly garments the words 'sucelaka' and 'paṭa' have been used, and for coarser kinds of cloth 'varāṣi' and 'sthūlaśāṭaka'. It is interesting to note in this connection that the coarser and cheaper varieties of Benares tissue 'sāṛis' and brocades are usually designated by the local traders as 'rāsimal', which is probably the degenerated form of the Sanskrit 'Varāṣi'. In Vedic literature, however, 'Barāṣi' denotes a variety of cloth manufactured from the fibres of the Baras tree.

In the categories of wrappers and bed coverings various sub-divisions have been noted. The bed covers are known as 'nicola' and 'pracchadapaṭa', and the rugs used as floor carpets are known as 'rallaka' and 'kambala'.

Let us also examine the Chinese pilgrims' accounts of India which form delightful readings from the point of view of the social history of India. Fa-hien who visited India in the early 5th century (A.D. 405-411) has unfortunately left only a meagre account for the reconstruction of its social history. Nearly two centuries later, however, when the greatest of the Chinese pilgrims, Yuan Chwang (A.D. 629-645) and after him I-tsing (A.D. 671-695) visited India, they recorded interesting details of the life of the people.

Yuan Chwang gives the following description of the clothing materials:

'Kiao-she-ye (Kauśeya)—this being the wild silk' obtained from

1. 'Ak.' II, 6, 114.

2. 'Ak.' II, 6, 115.

3. 'Ak.' II, 6, 115.

4. 'Bharatiya Vidyā,' I, 1, p. 34

5. 'Ak.' II, 6, 115.

6. Thomas Watters, 'On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India', Vol. I, p. 143, London, 1904.



the cocoon of 'Bombyx Mori'. The interpretation of 'kauṣeya' as wild silk does not seem to be right as the word 'kauṣeya' in the 'Amarakoṣa' stands for all kinds of silks obtained from cocoons, wild or cultured. Muslin, Yuan Chwang names as 'tieh', calico as 'pu', chu'i (or ch'u), mō (kṣauma) as a kind of linen, 'han' (or 'kan')-pō-lo' (kambala) a texture of fine wool (sheep's wool or goat's hair) and 'ho-la-li', a texture made from the wool of a wild animal—this wool being fine and soft and easily spun and woven was prized as a material for clothing<sup>2</sup>. 'Ho-la-li' whose Sanskrit equivalent is suggested as 'ral' by Watters is perhaps the same as the 'rallaka' of the 'Amarakoṣa', used for a variety of woollen cloths. At another place Yuan Chwang mentions 'śāṇaka' as a dark red cloth made of the fibre of the 'śāṇaka' plant (a kind of hemp, Cannabis Sativa or Crotalaria Juncea) used by 'bhikkhus'.

The accounts of the Chinese travellers and other written evidence throw light on the localities which were famous for the manufacture of cloth. Yuan Chwang speaks of a variety of striped cloth manufactured at Mathura.<sup>3</sup> It is noteworthy in this connection that in the Ajanta paintings both men and women wear garments made of striped cloth.

It is mentioned in the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta's time that a section of silk weavers migrated from Lāṭadeśa to Mandasor. Some of the migrants took to other professions but the remainder organised themselves in a separate guild. They built a temple of Sūrya in Mālava Śaṃvat 494 (437-38 A.D.) which was repaired in A.D. 473-464, when the above inscription was added.<sup>4</sup> In this inscription the weavers have beautifully expressed their just pride towards their profession and the high quality of their manufactured goods. The relevant portions are quoted below :

'Tarūnya-kāntyupacitopi-suvarṇa-hāra-tāmbūla-puṣpavidhināsama-  
amkṛtopi, nārījanah priyamupaiti na tāvad agrāśrayam yāvanna-paṭṭmaya-

1. Ak. II, 6, 111.

2. Watters, loc. cit., p. 146.

3. Ak. II, 6, 116.

4. Watters, loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 120.

5. Watters, loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 301.

6. Ind. Ant. XV, 176.



in mind the climatic conditions of the country which in the major part of the year is hot. 'dhoti' and 'dupattā,' 'sāris' and 'chādar' are the most suitable apparel from the hygienic point of view. But this did not preclude the Indians from wearing sewn and tailored garments also. There were, however, various modes of wearing the unsewn 'dhoti', 'dupattā', or 'chādar', which imparted grace to the wearer and changed the monotony of the wrapped round white sheets.

The description of uncut and also of tailor-made garments in the 'Amarakoṣa' however is meagre. For 'dhoti' there are four words: 'antariya, upasamvyāna, paridhāna' and 'adhomaśuka,' and for the 'dupattā' and 'chādar' five, namely, 'prāvāra, uttarāsaṅga, vṛhatikā, samvyāna' and 'uttariya'. It is difficult to point out the difference in the materials or measurements of the various synonyms of the 'dhotis' and 'dupattās'. For women's bodices the terms 'cola' and 'kūrpāsaka' have been used<sup>1</sup> but their difference is not indicated. The word 'kūrpāsaka' in the sense of bodice has been used several times by Kālidāsa.<sup>2</sup> As evident from the 'Rtusamhāra', 'kūrpāsaka' seems to have been a sort of close-fitting bodice. The winter cloak was known as 'niśāra'.<sup>3</sup> The woman's petticoat reaching to half the length of the thighs was known as 'caṇḍāraka'.<sup>4</sup> Later on, however, we find that the 'caṇḍāraka' had lost its particular meaning as woman's petticoat and was being used as a shirt both by men and women. A sewn garment reaching down to the feet was designated as 'prapadīna'.<sup>5</sup>

Passages in the Sanskrit literature of the Gupta age, especially in the works of Kālidāsa and Bāṇabhaṭṭa, throw considerable light on contemporary fashions. The women besides being draped in 'sāri' and 'chādar' also wore a 'vaikakṣya'. Describing the dress of Sāvitrī, Bāṇa observes that she had on a shawl (gātrikā) the knot of which was tied between her

1. Ak. II, 6, 117.

2. Ak. II, 6, 117-18.

3. Ak. II, 6, 118.

4. 'Rtusamhāra', IV, 16. 'Kūrpāsakam paridhātī nābhastayalāṅgi'. Ib., V, 8. 'Manojña-  
kūrpāsaka-piṇḍīstanaḥ'.

5. V, 8.

6. Ak. II, 6, 118.

7. Ib., II, 6, 119.

8. Ib., II, 6, 119.







In the sixth 'Aṅga' of the Jain canon, the Nāyā-Dhamma-Kahāo,<sup>1</sup> the costume of Prince Goyame is made up of a silken 'dhoti' ('amśuka') and cotton ('dukūla') scarf ('uttariya'). These pieces are described as coloured, soft to touch ('vaṇṇa-pharisa-sajuttam'), surpassing the delicacy of a horse's foam, white and worked with gold at the corners ('dhavala-kaṇaya-khaciyanta-kammam'), bright as the sky and crystal clear. In the 'Antagaḍa Dasāo'<sup>2</sup> it is mentioned that Prince Gautama at the time of his renunciation, when he was ready to go to his teacher, was clothed in a robe figured with swans ('haṃsa-lakkhaṇa-dugulla'), which could be lifted by the breath of the nostrils.

The people of higher social status dressed in the garments befitting their position in society. The mode of wearing the 'dhoti' by a member of this class is described by Bāṇa as follows: 'The youth whom Sarasvatī saw had his waist marked off by a tight drawn lower garment of 'harita' green, of which one corner was gracefully set in front, a little below the navel, and the hem hung over the girdle behind, and which on both sides was so girt up as to display a third of his thigh'.

Bāṇa was familiar with the appearance of the soldiers of his period. From his observant eyes even the smallest detail of their costume did not escape. The soldiers on foot in Bāṇa's time wore tunics spotted with black aloe-wood paste and their heads were covered with turbans made of scarves; their daggers were fastened in strong knots in sashes of double cloth<sup>3</sup>. The horsemen generally wore white turbans and the 'vārabāṇa'.<sup>4</sup> At times the soldiers wore spotted tunics imitating the tiger skin and turbans made of various strips of cloth<sup>5</sup>. The soldierly uniforms of the chieftains accompanying Harṣa when he started for

1. L. 12.

2. Tr. by Barnett, p. 46.

3. 'Purastādīśadadhonābhi-nibhātakakopa-kamanīyana prāṭhataḥ kṣtyyādīśakṣiptapallavena bhayataḥ saṅkalapapratatītoru tribhāgeṇa hārita-haritā nibhānīpīdītenā-dharmāśaśa vibhājyaśāśa-tanūtarāmadhyabhāgam', Ib., pp. 17-18.

4. 'Pīṇādīśa-kṣṣṣaguru-pāṭka-kāśa-ochurapa-kṣṣṣaśataśa-kāśya-kāśonīna, uttarīya-śrīṇa-śtroveṣṭanona'.

'Dviguṇapaṭṭapaṭṭikā-gādhagrānṭhi-grāhītāśāśheṇa', Ib., p. 16.

5. 'Dhavala-vārabāṇa-dhārīṇam, dhautā-dhūlā-paṭṭikā-pariveṣṭitamauḷīm', Ib., p. 19.

6. 'Tama-vyāghra-carmatāśa-śaśana-kāśonīka-dhārībhiḥ śaśapaṭṭaśāśakodhādīśa-maṇībhiḥ 'Kāśambhī', p. 161.



the battle-field was as follows : Their shanks were covered with delicately tinted 'netra' cloth. Their copper-coloured legs were chequered with mud-stained wraps and a heightened white was produced by trousers soft and dark as bees'. They wore tunics of dark blue lapis-lazuli shade<sup>2</sup>. Chinese cuirasses were thrown over them<sup>3</sup>. They also wore coats and doublets<sup>4</sup>, and other bodices speckled with the mixture of various colours<sup>5</sup> and shawls of the shade of a parrot's tail<sup>6</sup>. They wore turbans to which were stuck the stalks of ear-lotuses<sup>7</sup> and their heads were often wrapped in shawls of soft saffron hue<sup>8</sup>.

Some of the garments described above are recognisable, while others are not. 'Kañcuka' and 'vārabāṇa', according to the 'Amarakoṣa', are the body armour<sup>9</sup>. But from the description of the 'kañcuka' as worn by the chieftains it is evident that it was a tunic-like garment. At one place it is said to have been made from spotted cloth and at another place from cloth of lapis-lazuli shade. There is no hint given whether 'vārabāṇa' was made of metal or cloth. Probably it was a full-sleeved padded coat, something like the 'chiltā' of the Mughal period which was worn to guard the body against the thrust of sharp-edged weapons. 'Cīna-cola' has been translated by Cowell as Chinese cuirass, which in the English dictionaries is described as body-armour breast-plate and back-plate fastened together, or woman's close-fitting sleeveless bodice. From its description, one thing is certain that it was worn over the tunic and therefore it could be some sort of armour; or it could also be a padded full-sleeved long-coat with V-shaped neck which is worn all over Central Asia. What kind of coat 'stavāraka' was it is difficult to

1. 'Ucitra-netra-mukamāra-avanīha-gaṇa-sihagita-pāghā-kandāśca. kardamīza-paṭe-taṁmasita-  
pīśaṅga-plāṅgalya alinīla-maṅga-satula-samutpadita-citta-samayoga-parabhagaṇāḥ.' 'Harṣacarita', p. 202.

2. 'Avadātadeha-vīrājamāna-rājīvartaka-maṇakāḥ kañcukāḥ.' *Ib.*

3. 'Upaśīta-cīna-colaśāśīca.' *Ib.*

4. 'Tāra-mukhā stavāhita-stavaraka-vārabāṇaśāśīca.' *Ib.*

5. 'Nānābhāṣya-karṇura-kūrpdeśatāḥ.' *Ib.*

6. 'Śukapīchochābhāṣāchādanakāśīca.' *Ib.*

7. 'Uṣṣṭya-paṭṭāvastābhya-karpotpalanūlāśīca.' *Ib.*

8. 'Kumkumārāga-komalottariyāntaritottamāṅgaśāśīca.' *Ib.*, p. 202.

9. *II*, s. 64.



say. 'Kūrpāsaka' in the 'Amarakoṣa' is a synonym for 'coli.' Probably it was a garment of modern 'mirzai' type.

Bāṇa at several places has also given glimpses of the costumes of the officers of the state, messengers, mendicants, writers, etc. Such is the descriptive power of Bāṇa that with the sure touch of a master artist he creates an indelible picture of a person or event. Describing, for instance, the messenger sent by Kṛṣṇa, the brother of Harṣa, to Bāṇa, he gives in a line the complete picture of the costume of the messenger. "His tunic was tied with a 'kamarband' and his loose hair was tied behind with a dirty tattered cloth<sup>1</sup>." This simple description recreates the personality of a dust-covered messenger coming from a long distance. It seems that the door-keepers ('pratihārī' and 'mahāpratihārī') wore white tunics<sup>2</sup> and tied their waists with 'kamarbands.' The description of the costume of Bhairavācārya, a 'sanyāsī', and its comparison with the garments of a present-day Hindu 'sanyāsī' should convince us of the truthfulness of Bāṇa's observation. At one place he is mentioned as wearing a red ascetic's scarf hanging from his shoulders, which formed the 'vaikakṣa' scarf<sup>3</sup>, and his upper robe consisted of a tattered rag knotted above his heart and stained with red ochre. At another occasion when Harṣa saw Bhairavācārya at his place he wore a black woollen 'chādar' and loin-cloth made of linen<sup>4</sup>. Encircling him as 'paryāṅka' band was an ascetic's wrap in hue white as ambrosia foam<sup>5</sup>. He also wore sandals (pādukā)<sup>6</sup>.

In the paintings of Ajantā very few people wear turbans though turbans are fairly common in Gupta portrait coins which will be described later. The literature of the period is also particularly rich in reference

1. II. 8. 118.

2. 'Kādamika-cetacirīkānīyamitoccapācapālikam, *prṛtha-pratīkhat-pāṇacora-ghaṭilagallita-granthim.*' 'Harṣacarita', p. 41.

3. 'Vidhra-kāḥṇka-ochanna-vapuṣā.' *Ib.*, p. 49.

'kaḥṇkaśvaocannavapuṣā', 'Kādambari.' p. 85.

4. 'Harṣacarita', p. 49.

5. 'Dhāturaśrupena karpatena kṛtollārdsahgam.' *Ib.*, p. 86.

6. 'Kṛṣṇa-kambala-prāvaraṇa.' *Ib.*, p. 263.

7. 'Pāṇḍara pavitra kṣaumatvita-kaupīnam.' *Ib.*, p. 263.

8. 'Sāvaṣṭambha-paryāṅka-bandha-māpajalitaśmṛta-phana-śveta-rucāyoga-paṭṭakma.' *Ib.*

9. *Ib.*



to turbans. At one place in the 'Harṣacarita' the muslin strips which were used for tying the turbans are mentioned<sup>1</sup>. At another place turbans with large knots tied in the centre of the foreheads are described<sup>2</sup>. The rarity of turbans at Ajanta may be attributed to some local peculiarity or it may be due to the fact that the painters would not have been able to show the varied fashions in hairdressing had they covered the heads of the male figures with turbans, and hence they discarded the turban altogether.

#### IV.

Yuan Chwang, whose description of Indian costumes seems to have been borrowed from some old conventionalised sources, mentions that the Indians did not wear sewn clothes. They preferred white cloth. The men wound a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the armpits and left the right shoulder bare. The women wore a long robe which covered both the shoulders and fell down loose<sup>3</sup>. Yuan Chwang's description of the women's costume is rather vague and one is unable to decide whether 'kurti', 'chādar', or 'sāṛi' is meant. Besides these articles of common wear, in Northern India, because of its cold climate close-fitting jackets were worn resembling the garments of the same nature worn by the Tartars<sup>4</sup>. Probably these were of the later 'bagalbandi' type, a full-sleeved padded coat tied with fasteners on the left side.

I-tsing, another Chinese traveller, has given at some length the description of the costume of the laymen as well as of the clergy. Describing the costume of the clergy of the 'Mūlasarvāstivādin' school of Buddhism, I-tsing observes that their costume was made up of the following articles: 'saṅghāṭi' (double cloak), 'uttarāsaṅga' (upper garment) and 'antarvāsa' (inner garment)<sup>5</sup>. Besides these, the use of

1. 'Amśukopīṣa-paṭikāmrā.' *Ib.*, p. 14.

2. 'Uṣṣapattakapilāṭa-madhya-ghaṭita-vikāṣa-avaṭika-granthin.' *Ib.*, pp. 20-21.

3. Watters, *loc. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 148.

4. *Ib.*

5. 'A Record of the Buddhist religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago', p. 64.

Tr. by J. Takakusu. Oxford 1896.



the following articles was also ordained as lawful : (1) 'niśīdana', a mat for sitting or lying on ; (2) 'nivasana', an under-garment ; (3) 'pratinivasana', a second under-garment ; (4) 'saṃkākṣikā', a side-covering cloth ; (5) 'kāya-proñchana', a towel for wiping the body ; (6) 'mukha-proñchana', a towel for wiping the face ; (7) 'keśa-pratigraha', a piece of cloth for receiving hair when one shaves ; (8) 'bheṣajapar-iṣkāra cīvara', a cloth for defraying the cost of medicine. All the articles of costume, etc., not mentioned in the above list were not to be used except the woollen garments which the 'bhikkhus' could use<sup>1</sup>.

It seems that fine and rough silks were used by the 'bhikkhus' all over India, and I-tsing does not approve of any prohibition regarding the wearing of silk. In his opinion it was absurd that the wearing of linen which was difficult to procure was lawful, while the use of silk easily procurable was rejected. Another argument advanced in favour of the rejection of silk was that it was obtained by destroying life. I-tsing dismisses the argument by asserting that if the theory of the destruction of life were to be carried to a certain extreme the monks would be forced to discard practically everything.<sup>2</sup> This partiality towards silk may be explained by the fact that I-tsing came from a country where silk was manufactured in abundance and linen was difficult to procure. Incidentally it also shows the scientific bent of I-tsing's mind.

The distinction between the four Buddhist Nikāyas was made by the different modes in which they wore their under-garment (nīvāsana). The followers of the Mūlasarvāstivādin school drew the ends of the under-garment through the girdle and suspended them over it, whereas the followers of the Mahāsaṃghika school took the right end of the under-garment to the left side and pressed it tight under the girdle. This mode of wearing the under-garment could be compared with the mode of wearing the 'sāri' by the Indian women of that period. The mode of wearing the under-garment by the followers of the Sthavira-Nikāya and Sammita-Nikāya was similar to that of the followers of the Mahāsaṃghika Nikāya, except that the former left the ends of the

1. *Ib.* p. 65.

2. *Ib.*



under-garment outside, while the latter pressed them under the girdle. The girdles worn by the Buddhist monks of different sects were also of different kinds.<sup>1</sup>

A nun's mode of wearing the under-garment was the same as that of a monk of their respective school.<sup>2</sup> They wore 'uttarasaṅga', 'antarvāsa' and 'saṃkakaṣikā' in the same manner as the male members of their respective sub-sections of the church, but they wore their skirts in a different way. The skirt was known as 'kusūlaka', which could be translated as 'a bin-like garment', for its shape was like a small bin ('kusūla'). It was fashioned from a piece of cloth with its both ends sewn together. The measurement of the cloth was four cubits long and two wide. The skirt reached as far as the navel and came down as low as four fingers above the ankles. In putting it on, it was first stepped in and then was pulled up to the navel. The top of the skirt was contracted round the waist and tied at the back.<sup>3</sup> Ordinarily the nuns did not cover their sides or chest but after adolescence when their breasts developed they could cover them.<sup>4</sup>

The colour dyes for the use of the monks were prepared from 'kānda' (Rehmania glutinosa), yellow powder (Pterocarpus indicus), mixed with red ochre or red stone powder. An inexpensive method was to dye the cloths with the dyes prepared from dates, red earth, red stone powder, wild pear or earth purple.<sup>5</sup>

According to I-tsing, the Indians in general including the officers and the people of the higher classes wore a pair of soft white cloth as garment, while the poorer and the lower classes wore only a single piece of linen. The linen 'dhoti' worn all over India was eight feet long; it had no girdle and was not cut or sewn but was simply wrapped round the waist to cover the lower part.<sup>6</sup>

From Kashmir to all Mongol countries such as Suli, Tibet and the country of the Turkish tribes use was made of skin and wool for

1. *Ib.*, pp. 65-67.

2. *Ib.*, p. 67.

3. *Ib.*, p. 78.

4. *Ib.*

5. *Ib.*, p. 77.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 67-68.



garments; cotton cloth was resorted to occasionally. On account of the cold climate the people wore shirts and trousers.<sup>1</sup>

It is also mentioned by I-tsing that the monks as well as the laymen in the colder climates wore a garment called 'Li-pa' which seems to be derived from Sanskrit 'repha' or 'lepa' though its origin is uncertain.

It was made in the following way: A piece of cloth was cut so as to have no back and also one shoulder was bare. It was sleeveless. The part covering the left shoulder was not wide. It was tied on the right as a protection against the wind. The garment was padded with cotton-wool to make it thick and warm. Sometimes this garment was sewn together on the right hand side and ribbons were attached at the top end<sup>2</sup>. I-tsing saw this garment in use in Western India, and the priests from the north generally wore it. It was however not worn in the vicinity of Nālandā monastery due to the hot climate of Bihār<sup>3</sup>. Some priests and laymen wore half shirts though it was against the monastic laws for priests to do so<sup>4</sup>.

Taka-kusu, in the translation of that part of I-tsing's account dealing with the mode of wearing religious garments is not clear. The 'saṃghāṭī' probably, though the name of the garment is not mentioned, was five cubits at both ends; four or five fingers from the collar, a square piece of cloth measuring five-finger in width was stitched on. It had a hole in the centre through which a ribbon of silk or cotton was passed. These ribbons were tied at the chest<sup>5</sup>. The ribbon and fastener were attached to the upper garment for the purpose of pulling it up a little and tying it in front during meal time<sup>6</sup>. The skirt or lower garment was five cubits long by two cubits wide. It was single or double. This was worn to cover the navel. Both ends of the lower garment were tied in three twists. This fastening was tucked back to be hidden from view. The lower garment was tied with a waistband<sup>7</sup>.

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1. *Ib.*, p. 68.
  2. *Ib.*, p. 69.
  3. *Ib.*, pp. 69-70.
  4. *Ib.*, p. 70.
  5. *Ib.*, pp. 72-73.
  6. *Ib.*, p. 73.
  7. *Ib.*, pp. 73-76.



The 'kurtā', an article of common wear in Northern India, seems to have been known in the Gupta period. In the Fan-yu-tsa-ming, the Sanskrit Chinese dictionary of Li-yen—who died between A.D. 785-794—the Sanskrit word for the Chinese 'chan' meaning shirt is 'kuratu'.<sup>1</sup> This word however does not exist in Sanskrit. Its source is uncertain. It may be compared with the 'curta-cabaya' of the Portuguese, but it is difficult to believe that the word 'kurtā' was derived from the Portuguese, a language with which Indians came into contact nearly a thousand years after Li-yen had compiled his dictionary. Probably the Portuguese adopted the Indian word which must have been common in the seventeenth century or earlier. The association of 'cabaya' with 'curta' in the Portuguese 'curta-cabaya' shows that 'kurtā' and 'cabaya' were interrelated. The 'kurtā' was worn underneath the 'kaba'—a Persian word for a long gown—and these two constituted important articles in the costume of the Mughals. But the origin of 'kuratu' in Li-yen's dictionary is still unknown.

From the Chinese sources we also gain some knowledge of the footwear of the Indians in the Gupta period. In the Fan-yu-tsa-ming, the Sanskrit equivalent of 'hiue' meaning boot in Chinese is given as 'kavaṣi'. This word again is foreign to Sanskrit. The word, as Pelliot remarks, resembles the Iranian 'kafš', (shoe), still used among the Turkish tribes of Central Asia under the form 'kāpīš' and 'kīpīš', meaning sandals. The form may be compared with the Tibetan 'kab-sa' which signifies leather shoes of Hindu fashion used by the wealthier Tibetans. In the 'Le Fan Tang Siao Si' ('Brahma-cina-varṭta-mukha') an appendix to the dictionary Yi-tsing there are two Sanskrit words 'śavanasa' and 'pūla' standing for the Chinese 'hiue' and 'hia' meaning boots and shoes. In the 'Mahāvyutpatti' are many words for boots and shoes 'upānaḥ', 'pādukā', 'pādaveṣṭanikā', 'pūla', and 'maṇḍa-pūlāḥ' ('maṇḍa-pūla'). The 'pūla' of the 'Le Fan Tang Siao Si' is the same as 'pūlā-pūla' of the 'Mahāvyutpatti'. The origins of the 'śavanasa' and 'pūla' however are uncertain.<sup>2</sup>

1. Bagchi, P. C., 'Doux Langues Sanskrit-Chinois', Tome II, p. 337, Paris, 1937.

2. *Ib.* p. 440.



Apparently the words mentioned above for shoes were either coined in Central Asia or belonged to the 'deśī bhāṣā' or popular speech in India. I am unable to trace the origin of 'pūla', but 'muṇḍapūla' of the 'Mahāvīyutpatti' seems to have been derived from 'muṇḍā' or a common variety of country-made shoe without the decorative hook at the tip. This 'muṇḍā' shoe is worn by peasants all over the eastern United Provinces of India. The 'kavaṣi' in the 'Fan-yu-tsa-ming' which is perhaps the same as Iranian 'kaṭs' and 'kāpiš-kipiš' of Central Asia has its equivalent in the Sanskrit 'khaṇḍusā' mentioned in the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya' and described as boots covering the knees. The probability is that 'khaṇḍusā' or 'kavaṣi' were boots of Iranian origin brought to India by the Sakas and the Kusāns whose Iranian affinities are well known.

## V.

The Jain canon whose study unfortunately has been neglected so far is full of information about Indian costumes and textile materials both as used by the monks and nuns and also the laymen. This information is however given in greater detail in the 'Cheda-sūtras' or that portion of the Jain ceremonial literature which prescribes rules for the rightful conduct of the monks. There are six such 'Cheda-sūtras', the most important of them being the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra'. The information in the 'sūtra' portion is laconic, though it is greatly augmented by the 'bhāṣyas', and commentaries written at a much later date.

In the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya', a work of unsurpassed interest to students of social history, a large section is devoted to monastic costumes, the different degrees of sin attached to wearing the unlawful garments and the expiatory rites connected with them, etc. Incidentally, much light is thrown on the laymen's costume as well. The 'sūtra' portion of the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra' is admittedly very old and its authorship is ascribed to Bhadrabāhu who was a contemporary of Candragupta Maurya in the fourth century B. C. The 'Bhāṣya', on the 'sūtras' however is of considerably later date and contains much more original material than the 'sūtras'. The date of the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya' by Jinadāsa Kṣamāśramaṇa has not been fixed but there is no reason to believe that it is later than the



Gupta period; within the 'Bhāṣya' itself there are references to contemporary coins and kings, etc. which would fix its date to the 1st. or 2nd. century A. D. Anyway, its materials can be utilised for the social history of India in the Gupta period as the text of the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra', if the Jain tradition is to be believed, with the Aṅgas was edited and compiled in the third council of the Jain teachers held at Valabhi in the fifth century at the invitation of Devardhigaṇi Kṣamāsramaṇa.

The 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya' enjoins the change of garments on four occasions: (1) the clothes which were changed daily ('nityanivasana'); (2) the washed clothes changed after taking one's bath ('majjanikam'); (3) festive garments ('kṣaṇotsavikam') worn while attending fairs and festivities; (4) garments worn while paying calls on the kings, nobles, etc. ('rājadvārikam'). The interest in the fourfold division lies in the fact that an Indian of high social status till recently believed in wearing his garments appropriate to the occasion. It is but recently that a westernization of Indian clothing and a sluggish, careless manner has narrowed the difference between the clothes to be worn on different occasions but even now it is not uncommon to reserve a suit or coat for the ceremonial occasions.

The fashion of the day demanded a high finish of the washed clothes, and the different processes are frequently mentioned in Jain literature to give a nice finish to the washed clothes. At first the cloth was washed ('dhauta'); then it was calendered ('ghṛṣṭa') and starched ('mṛṣṭa') and then perfumed ('sampradhūmita').<sup>1</sup>

The importance of clothing among the Jains could also be gauged from the strong belief<sup>2</sup> that the different parts of a cloth are presided by different gods and demons. It is said that the four corners are presided by the deities whose names have not been given; the border and middle portions are assigned to a class of Ancestors, the parts touching the ears come within the domain of the Asuras, and the central point is presided over by the Rākṣasas. The relation of the supernatural elements

1. I, 614.

2. 'Bṛhat Bhāṣya', III, 3001.

3. Ib., III, 3003.



with the cloth seems to have been enjoined so that the religious garments should be up to the prescribed measurements otherwise the benign and evil spirits would be disturbed.

The Jain monks in this age in keeping with the ancient authority of Bhadrabāhu<sup>1</sup> were allowed the use of the following lawful textile materials : 'jāṅgika', 'bhāṅgika', 'śāṇaka', 'pottaka' and 'tiriṭa-pattra'. The 'jāṅgika' is described in the 'bhāṣya' as cloth manufactured from camel's hair. In connection with woollen cloth the 'bhāṣya' mentions that cloth manufactured from sheep's wool was 'aṇṇika', from camel's hair 'austrika' and from deer's hair 'mṛga-roma'; 'kutapa' is explained as 'jīṇa', and 'kitta' was manufactured from the wool or hair, which apparently means that this variety of cloth was manufactured from the residue of the hair or wool after the best part had been utilised for better grades of cloth ('tesāmevornaromādīnāmavayavaḥ tanniṣṭṭannam vastramapi'.)<sup>2</sup>

In the 'bhāṅgika' class of textile materials are included linen, and the cloth made from the fibre obtained from bamboo shoots. Śāṇa is hempen cloth; 'pottaka' is the cloth manufactured from cotton, and 'tiriṭapatta' is made from the bark of the Tiriṭa tree.

The Jain monks' garments had to conform to the following requisites: They had to be of proper measurement ('pramāṇavat'), of even texture ('samam'), strong ('sthira') and beautiful ('rucikāraka').<sup>3</sup>

The wearing of woollen undergarments was disallowed to the Jain monks as it attracted lice and dirt. If, however, the woollen garment formed an outer covering it did not become dirty and protected the

1. Ib. Vol. IV p. 1017, 'aṇṇika'.

2. Ib. Vol. IV, 2661.

3. 'Bṛhat-kalpa Bhāṣya', Vol. IV, 3363.

4. In the footnote ('Bṛhat', IV, p. 1016, fn. 2) the learned editors have quoted the explanation of the above terms from two 'Ōṣṭi'. According to one 'Ōṣṭi' the 'mṛga-roma' is explained as 'śalomaṇi mṛga-romamvā'. 'Śaloma' may mean bristling with hair or may also mean fur; 'mṛga-roma' apparently means the hair of the moccas, but here the 'mṛga-roma' may indicate all sorts of rodents from the colder regions, whose pelts were used for cloth-making. In the 'Vāsepa Ōṣṭi', 'mṛga-roma' is described as 'pavvaeyānam roma' or knotted wool of goat; the 'kutapa' is described as made of some part of goat's wool thereby meaning that 'kutapa' was made from the shaggy hair, the better cloth or pashmina being made from the hair of the underside. 'Kittima' according to the 'Ōṣṭi' was also made from goat's hair ('śaḥagaliyāromam').

5. Ib. Vol. III, 2, 825.



body against cold.<sup>1</sup> The monks, if they could not obtain cotton undergarments, were allowed to use as alternatives an undergarment made of 'tiritapatta' cloth or silk ('kausikāra'; Prākṛt: 'kausiyyā'). If there was no woollen 'chādar' then the first alternative was a wrapper made from fabrics of bark ('valkajam'); the second was silk ('kauseyya'); and the third was a wrapper made from 'tiriṭa' bark.<sup>2</sup>

Among the five kinds of cloth described above as lawful to the Jain monks, a combination of two such, as of cotton and wool, bark or 'tiriṭa', etc. was allowed. Transgressing this rule meant sin.<sup>3</sup>

Then certain technical terms about cutting, etc. are described. Thus the garment without cut, joints and unsewn is called 'natural' ('yathā kṛtam'). The garment whose border ('daśikā') was only cut or made by joining two pieces or which was sewn ('tunnam vā kartavyam') was called 'alpaparīkarma'. If it was cut or joined or was according to the measurement of the body and was profusely sewn then that was a 'bahuparīkarma' garment.

All these types were used by the laymen, but for the monk only the first kind was lawful; but in case he was unable to procure it he could use even the second and third type after performing certain expiatory rites.<sup>4</sup> In case, however, the monk was sick or on tour this law was held in abeyance.<sup>5</sup>

The monks were disallowed the use of 'kṛtsna' or 'whole' clothes, which seem to have been used by laymen.<sup>6</sup> The 'kṛtsna' garments are divided on their merits into the following six classes: 'nāma' (according to name), 'sthāpanā' (of fixed order), 'dravya' (according to ingredients and materials), 'kṣetra' (according to place), 'kāla' (according to time) and 'bhāva' (according to feeling).<sup>7</sup>

The 'dravya' variety of cloth is further sub-divided into 'sakala' and

1. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3387.

2. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3388.

3. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3379.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3371.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3372.

6. 'Śūdra', *Ib.*, IV, p. 1037.

7. *Ib.*, IV, 3390.



'pramāṇa' subsections. The 'sakala' is defined as closely woven ('ghanam', 'tanubhiḥ sāndram'), smooth ('masṛnam'), free from ladders ('nirupahatam', 'añjana-khañjanādidoṣarahitam') and with border ('sadaśākam'). It is again classified according to quality as worst ('jaghanya'), middling ('madhyama') and best ('utkṛṣṭa'). The commentary explains 'jaghanya' as mouth-cloth etc. ('mukha-potikādi'), middling as perfumed, etc. ('paṭalakādi') and best as starched ('kalapakādi'). The 'pramāṇa-kṛtsna' variety is described as the cloth whose length and breadth ('vistārāyama') exceed the measurements prescribed for the monks.<sup>2</sup>

By the 'kṣetrakṛtsna' variety are meant those cloths which were not available in certain parts of the country, or if available, were very costly. The commentary adds the remark that the cloths produced in Eastern India were available at a very high cost in Lāṭa or Gujarat.<sup>3</sup>

The 'kāla-kṛtsna' variety was very costly in certain parts of the year and available with great difficulty. The commentary notes: 'as red garments in summer, wrappers in winter ('śiśīram prāvarakādi') and saffron coloured robes in the rainy season ('varṣāsu kumkuma-khacitādi').'<sup>4</sup>

The 'bhava kṛtsna' variety is sub-divided into 'varṇayuta', 'according to colours', and 'mūlyayuta', 'according to prices'.<sup>5</sup>

There were three price grades for worst, middling and best qualities. The cloth which was valued at eighteen 'kāṛṣāpaṇas' was of the worst quality and the one costing a hundred thousand was of the best quality. The cost of the middling variety ranged above eighteen 'kāṛṣāpaṇas' but was less than a lac.<sup>6</sup>

In connection with the expiation prescribed for the monks who wore costly garments the different price grades of the cloth are given as 18, 20, 49, 500, 999, 10000, 50000 and 100000 'kāṛṣāpaṇas'.<sup>7</sup>

1. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3381-82.

2. *Ib.*, IV, 3383.

3. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3384.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3385.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3387.

6. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3390.

7. *Ib.*, 3392.



Expiatory rites were prescribed for the monks who attracted by the beauty of the costly garments wore their shabby garments grudgingly. This prohibition of certain clothes was based on commonsense. If a monk was on tour the wearing of costly garments resulted in inviting thieves.<sup>1</sup> That was not all; a poor monk wearing rich garments was often put under arrest by custom officers, who under the suspicion that the garments were stolen property, punished the monk.<sup>2</sup> In this connection the story of a Jain teacher is related. The teacher was once presented with a very costly shawl ('kambala-ratna'). While passing on the road covered with the shawl he was espied by a thief. The teacher after returning to the monastery tore the shawl to pieces. In the night the thief came and demanded the shawl from him with dagger drawn and on being told that it was torn to pieces did not believe him. At this the teacher showed the thief the torn pieces. In great anger the thief after sewing the pieces together took away the shawl as it was.<sup>3</sup>

The poor Jain monks, however, were allowed a certain amount of liberty in 'sthūṇā' country. Here there was no fear of robbers and the wearing of costly garments did not excite any curiosity. Under such ideal conditions even the prohibited garments could be worn by the monks after having removed their borders.<sup>4</sup> But there were cases when even the borders ('daṣikā') were allowed to remain. In certain cloths of weak texture the borders were added to strengthen them so that they could be worn for a long time. In such garments the borders were allowed to remain. In certain countries in which the cloth did not possess broad borders they were allowed to remain. The commentary cites the example of Sindhu.<sup>5</sup>

The monks suffering from asthma were allowed to wear garments of the measurement prescribed otherwise.<sup>6</sup> The monks could also

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1. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3899-3900.

2. *Ib.*, 3901.

3. *Ib.*, IV, 3903-4.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3908.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3925.

6. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3907.



possess garments having a border for presentation to the doctor attending on them.

Nepal, Tamralipti and Sindhu-Sauvira seem to have been great centres of production of costly textile materials. In the above-named countries everybody used 'kṛtsna' garments, even the monks.<sup>1</sup> In the countries like Nepal, etc, there was no fear of thieves, neither was there any special honour attached to wearing costly garments. In the Sindhu-Sauvira country on the contrary, wearing shabby garments was looked down upon. Under such conditions even the monks could use costly garments.<sup>2</sup>

In certain countries (the commentary adds the name of Mahārāṣṭra) the blue blanket ('nilakambala') was a costly article, but out of sheer necessity the monks could use it in winter as nothing else could give warmth.<sup>3</sup>

It seems that the Jain Church, at least in the later phase of its development, took into consideration the comforts and conveniences of princely novices. As it was difficult for them to sleep in coarse clothes they were allowed the soft ones till they got used to the monkish garment.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the usual 'dhoti' and 'chādar' the monks were allowed to use a 'kamarband' ('paryastaka') of cotton ('phālaḥ'); it was neither coloured nor patterned ('acitraḥ'); it was only four fingers wide and without joints.<sup>5</sup> Incidentally these instructions show that the 'kamarband' richly coloured and patterned and fairly wide was used by laymen, a fact corroborated by Ajantā paintings.

The monks were also allowed to wear a 'gōpālakañcuka' or 'cowherd tunic' while attending on a sick nun, which required them to turn her on the back and to clean her. No further description of this

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1. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8911.

2. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8916.

3. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8914.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8914.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8968.



particular type of 'cowherd tunic' is given. But by inference it could be said that it was a long full-sleeved tunic worn to avoid contamination.<sup>1</sup>

Beside the varieties of cloth described above two sets of different types of 'dūṣyas', each containing five varieties, are described.

These were used by the laymen. In the first set 'koyava', 'prāvāraka', 'dādhikālī', 'pūrikā' and 'viralikā' are mentioned.<sup>2</sup>

The following is their description in the commentary :

1. 'Koyava' is described as a wrapper stuffed with cotton.
2. 'Prāvāraka' is described as a fluffy blanket from Nepal ( 'Nepālādī ulvaṇa-romā-brhatkambalaḥ'. ) Apparently the order is changed in the commentary by mistake, as usually 'koyava' is a blanket and 'prāvāra' the stuffed wrapper.

3. 'Dādhikālī.' It was a washed wrapper, very white, with a dented decoration on the borders.

4. 'Pūrikā'. It was woven with sparsely placed yarns; or it also denoted the sack-cloth woven out of coarse hempen yarns.

5. 'Viralikā'—Dostūti.

In the second division are included 'upadhāna', 'tūli', 'āliṅgaṇikā', 'gaṇḍopadhāna' and 'masūraka',<sup>3</sup> which are different kinds of pillows.

1. 'Upadhāna.' Pillow stuffed with swan feathers.
2. 'Tūli'. Stuffed with clean cotton ( 'samskṛtarūta' ) or 'arka' cotton.

3. 'Āliṅgaṇikā'. The body size pillow which was put between the thighs while sleeping.

4. 'Gaṇḍopadhāna.' Pillow for the temples ( 'gaṇḍa-masūrikā' ).

5. 'Masūraka.' It was a round cushion ( 'cakkala-gaddikādi' ) made of leather or cloth, and stuffed with cotton.<sup>4</sup>

The costume of the Jaina nuns however seems to have been very elaborate. Every precaution seems to have been taken to ensure that their dress covered the body perfectly. The following eleven items

1. *Ih.*, Vol. IV, 3798.

2. *Ib.*, IV, 3829.

3. *Ib.*, IV 3824.

4. *Ib.*, IV, 3824.



have been recounted in the 'Brhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya':<sup>1</sup> 'avagraha, paṭṭa, ardhoruka, calanikā, abhyantara-nivasanī, bahir-nivasanī, kañcuka, aupakakṣikī, vaikakṣikī, saṃghāṭī and skandhakaraṇī.'

The following are their descriptions :

1. 'Avagraha.' A cover for the private parts. It was broad in the middle and constricted at the sides and was made of closely woven and smooth cloth.<sup>2</sup>

2. 'Paṭṭa.' It was tied with fasteners fixed on its sides. It was four fingers in width and its length was in accordance with the measurement of the nun's waist. This piece covered the ends of the 'avagraha' and looked like wrestler's shorts ('mallakakṣāvat').<sup>3</sup> The wrestler's close-fitting shorts are known as ('kaccha') even to-day.

3. 'Ardhoruka.' It covered the 'avagraha' and 'paṭṭa' and therefore the whole waist. It was shaped like the wrestler's shorts ('jāṅghīā', 'mallacalanākṛtiḥ') except that its broad end was firmly tied between the two thighs ('ūrudvaye ca kasāvabaddhaḥ').<sup>4</sup> It resembled something like the modern 'lāgoṭa'.

4. 'Calanikā.' It was the same as 'ardhoruka' though it reached half the length of the thighs. It was unsewn and its shape could be compared with the loin-cloth of the bamboo-top dancers ('laṅkhika').<sup>5</sup>

5. 'Antarnivasanī'. Beginning from the waist it reached half the length of the thighs. It was worn at the time of dressing to avoid being naked and thus becoming the laughing stock of the people.<sup>6</sup>

6. 'Bahir-nivasanī'. Beginning from the waist it reached the ankles. It was tied to the waist with a string.<sup>7</sup>

7. 'Kañcuka'. It was an unsewn garment three and a half bands in length and one hand in width. This piece was firmly tied on both sides

1. *Ib.*, IV, 4082-83.

2. *Ib.*, IV, 4094.

3. *Ib.*, 4098.

4. *Ib.*

5. *Ib.*

6. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 4097.

7. *Ib.*



of the waist. It also covered the firm breasts whose contours were brought into prominence by tight garments.<sup>1</sup>

8. 'Aupakakṣikī'. It was like a 'kañcuka' and made of a piece one and a half hands square. It covered a part of the chest and back and was tied over the left shoulder.<sup>2</sup>

9. 'Vaikakṣikī'. It was an opposite of the 'aupakakṣikī' and was worn on the left side and covered 'paṭṭa,' 'kañcuka' and 'aupakakṣikī'.<sup>3</sup>

10. 'Saṃghātī'. They were four in number, one measuring two hands, two measuring three hands and one measuring four hands in width. In length all the four were from three and half hands to four. One of the 'saṃghātīs' measuring two hands in width was worn while the nun was in the convent ; among the two 'saṃghātīs' of three hands' width one was worn on begging tours and the other while proceeding to the lavatory ; the 'saṃghātī' with four hands width was worn while attending the religious discourses so that it could cover the whole body while the nun stood erect.<sup>4</sup>

11. 'Skandhakaraṇī'. It was a square piece of cloth four hands in length which was kept on the shoulder fourfold to serve as a protecting cover against strong wind. This garment was also used to dwarf the stature of beautiful nuns by placing it on the back and tying it with the 'aupakakṣikī' and 'vaikakṣikī'.<sup>5</sup>

While wearing the undergarments the nuns were not allowed to arrange one end of the 'sāṇī' in folds and tug it in front or on the sides. This part of the garment when arranged in folds is called 'ukkha'. In the 'Niṣītha Cūṛṇī' it is explained thus : 'Over the middle part of the lower garment arranged as a round protuberance near the navel'.<sup>6</sup>

The nuns were not allowed to wear a 'kamarband' ('paryastikā') for fear of being accused of being fashionable. In the case of illness, however,

1. *Ib.*, IV, 4036.

2. *Ib.*

3. *Ib.*, IV, 4039.

4. *Ib.*, IV, pp. 4039-50.

5. *Ib.*, 4091.

6. *Ib.*, Vol. II, 1067



they could use it, but then the 'kamarband' was not to be made from netted materials ('ajālikāh').<sup>1</sup>

From the above list of the garments of the nuns it is quite clear that the majority of them, if not all, were used by the women of the Gupta period. In the Ajantā paintings, garments like 'ardhoruka', 'calanikā', 'bahir-nivasanī' and 'saṃghātī' are fairly common. These are without exception worn by ordinary women. It seems that in the Gupta period the costume of the Jaina nuns was based on the model of the women's costume then prevalent with the additional garments to avoid nakedness of any part of the body which, as far as the ordinary women were concerned, was considered not a matter of shame but quite in keeping with the fashion of the day.

It is peculiar that in the highly luxurious society of the Gupta age in which a refined sensuality was tolerated without dubbing it immodest, the dancers, both male and female, covered their bodies completely. This is fully supported by the Ajantā wall paintings in which the dancers whose sex cannot be determined wear tunics and trousers. The 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya'<sup>2</sup> mentions that the danseuse ('nartakī') having dressed properly did not feel ashamed when lifting her legs. Even the acrobatic danseuse ('laṅkhikā') while performing hundreds of tricks in the arena could not feel embarrassed as she was properly dressed. Fortunately for us a good description of a dancer's costume is preserved in the 'Rāyapaseṇaiya'.<sup>3</sup> The occasion which afforded the opportunity for the above description was the staging of thirty-two kinds of dances before Mahāvīra at the behest of Sūryabha Deva. The dancers who appeared on the stage at the command of Sūryabha Deva were young and handsome and wore an 'uttariya' dangling on both sides, a tight waistband ('parikara') made of variegated cloth ('uppiliya-ciṭṭa-paṭṭa-pariyara'), tunics<sup>4</sup> and various multi-coloured gar-

1. *Ib.* V, 5966.

2. *Ib.* IV, 4137.

3. Ed. by Pandit Bechardea.

4. The following description of the garment is given : 'Baphuyaka-vattaraiya-saṃgāya-gaṇḍambavasthantā',—the hanging end of the garment turning round like frothy waves and cut after identical requirements ('saṃgatā'), com. 'nāṭyavidhau upapañnāh'). Either it is a tunic or an apron-like garment worn over the tunic. For freedom of movement this apron-like garment as shown at Ajantā is so cut that its lower ends hang absolutely loose. (Fig. 69).



ments ('citta-cillaga-niyansanāṇam'). They wore a simple one-stringed necklace ('ekāvalī') and other ornaments.<sup>1</sup> This was the costume of the male dancers. From the other end of the stage however entered an equal number of danseuses. They wore 'tilaka' ornaments and a chaplet was tied round their coiffure ('tilaya-amelanam'); round their necks was a torque and their breasts were covered with tight breast-bands.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Jain sources it can be inferred that leather was used in making shoes. Five kinds of leather, namely, cowhide, buffalo hide, goat skin, sheep skin and the skin of wild animals have been recounted in the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra Bhāṣya'.<sup>3</sup> The Jain monks and nuns were disallowed the use of any kind of leather goods of any type and colour.<sup>4</sup> It may be inferred from this that shoes of coloured leather and standard types and sizes were in demand by the people. These leather shoes of standard types and colours were divided into the following four varieties: 'Sakala-kṛtsna', 'pramāṇa-kṛtsna', 'varṇakṛtsna' and 'bandhanakṛtsna'.<sup>5</sup>

The 'sakalakṛtsna' is defined as single-soled ('ekapuṭam' or 'ekatalam').<sup>6</sup> This single-soled shoe, 'talikā' as it is called, could be used by the Jain monks at night to avoid thorns. In day-time these shoes could be worn when the caravan with which they travelled took a short-cut, as the wearing of shoes at such occasions facilitated walking.<sup>7</sup>

The 'pramāṇa-kṛtsna' shoes had two, three or more soles.<sup>8</sup>

'Khallakā.' The commentary says that they were of two varieties, half 'khallakā' ('ardha-khallakā') and full 'khallakā' ('samasta-khallakā'). The half 'khallakā' shoes covered half the leg while the full 'khallakā' covered the whole leg.<sup>9</sup>

1. 'Rāyapaṇḍita', pp. 133-34.

2. *Ib.*, p. 125, 'pinaddha-garaḥḥakaṇḥkṛtsnam'.

3. Vol. IV, 3324.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, p. 1039.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3340.

6. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3347.

7. *Ib.*, Vol. II, 3384.

8. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3347.

9. *Ib.*



The 'khapusā' shoes covered the knees.<sup>1</sup> The 'vāgura' type covered the toes and the feet; and the 'kośaka' type covered the toes to protect the nails against stones, etc., while walking. The 'jaṅghā' type covered the thighs and the 'ardhajaṅghā' covered half of the thighs.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere<sup>3</sup> another kind of shoe called 'puṭaka' is mentioned. It was made of straps which covered the skin so that it should not crack during the winter.

The 'kośaka' and 'khapusā' shoes were used to avoid cold, snow, snakes and thorns. Apparently these varieties were used in colder climates. Even the monks could use them without transgressing any instruction.<sup>4</sup>

The 'sakala-kṛtsna' type is further defined as the shoe ('kramanikā') made to the exact measurement of the foot; it is not cut or joined in the middle or any other part.<sup>5</sup>

The 'pramāṇa-kṛtsna' shoes include all the varieties described above with the exception that in this type all the varieties had two, three or more soles.<sup>6</sup>

The 'varṇa-kṛtsna' were the shoes made from white or coloured leather.<sup>7</sup>

The 'bandhana-kṛtsna' type of shoes had fasteners more than three in number.<sup>8</sup> In another place<sup>9</sup> it is described as sewn or fastened with two or three or even more lines of sewings or fastenings of hemp or cotton threads.

The shoes or boots in general had two fasteners, one hemp fastener at the knees, the other at the five toes. If there were three fasteners then one was at the knee, the second was at the big toe and the third covered the rest of the four toes.<sup>10</sup>

1. *Ib.*

2. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8847.

3. *Ib.*, Vol. III, 2884.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. III, 2835.

5. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3543.

6. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8849.

7. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8861.

8. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 2831.

9. *Ib.*, 8862.

10. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8870.



Among the varieties of shoes mentioned above, the 'khalaka' and 'khapusā' type are often represented in the Ajantā paintings and Gupta coins.

As already said, monks were not allowed to wear these shoes as they were considered fashionable. They were advised to cut the leather from which they got their shoes in eighteen parts which were then sewn together. No coloured leather was used. Their shoes had only one sole and only one fastener ('ekabandham').<sup>1</sup>

The use of any different kind of shoes was not allowed to the monks on the following grounds: (1) The use of leather meant cruelty to cows and other animals.<sup>2</sup> (2) The shoes being hard, killed the tiny animals while walking.<sup>3</sup> (3) While walking without shoes the people looked carefully for thorns, etc. and in doing so also espied worms and other tiny creatures and avoided them, but with shod feet the men became more careless of thorns and therefore about worms, etc.<sup>4</sup> (4) The very use of shoes presupposed cruelty to the animal world.<sup>5</sup> (5) The tiny creatures were tender by nature and they could not be expected to withstand the pressure of shoes.<sup>6</sup>

But however meritorious might have been the non-wearing of shoes from the religious point of view it was not possible in the practical everyday life of the Jain monks, and therefore certain exceptions were made to the general rule. The otherwise unlawful wearing of shoes was allowed to the monks on tour, to those who were ill, to those whose feet were tender by nature, to those who were in constant fear of wild animals and robbers, to those who suffered from leprosy, piles or short-sightedness, to child-monks and to nuns on tour. In times of family troubles and mishaps in the country or 'saṃgha', the unlawful shoes could be freely used.<sup>7</sup> On tour, the monk was advised to wear the 'kośa' and

1. *Ib.*, IV, 8573.

2. *Ib.*, 8536.

3. *Ib.*, 8537.

4. *Ib.*, 8538.

5. *Ib.*, 8539.

6. *Ib.*, 8561.

7. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 8584.



'khapusā' type of shoes.<sup>1</sup> If a monk was forced to wear unlawful shoes he should choose black-coloured shoes; in their absence, however, red-coloured shoes or shoes of any other colour could be worn but not before they were discoloured.<sup>2</sup>

## VI.

In the reliefs of Goli are depicted types of male costume as worn in South India in the 4th century. While describing these costumes it is necessary to point out that the South Indian costumes of the 3rd. and 4th. centuries A. D. were very little different from those represented in the Amarāvati and Nāgārjunī-Koṇḍa reliefs.

### Costumes of Men of Status :

The princes and the men of higher position wore a simple 'dhoti' tied with a 'kamarband' and turban. The typical mode of wearing the 'dhoti' is shown in the figure of a Nāgarāja (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup> The 'dhoti' reaching a little above the knees is tied to the waist with a looped kamarband, the loop and the free end being passed through a ring. At another place a prince of very high standing, perhaps Siddhārtha, wears a 'dhoti', one end of which is pleated and tucked in in front. It is tied on the waist with a roped belt with elaborate tassels. Through this belt is passed the 'kamarband'. The figure wears a turban to which is attached a heart-shaped ornament with the figure of a bird in the middle (Fig. 2).<sup>4</sup>

A man in private life or in the seclusion of his home wore a 'dhoti' made of thicker stuff tied with a 'kamarband', both ends of which hung freely in front (Fig. 3).<sup>5</sup> There is no turban.

### Soldier's Costume :

Soldiers on march wore a 'dhoti' whose front was folded and tucked in to facilitate marching. A 'kamarband' worn transversely over the waist secured the 'dhoti' (Fig. 4).<sup>6</sup> In certain cases, however, the end of the

1. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3869.

2. *Ib.*, Vol. IV, 3867.

3. Ramchandra, 'Buddhist Sculptures from a shipa n a Goli Village, Guntur District' *Pl. IV, J. MacGregor*, 1920.

4. *Ib.*, Pl. IX, No. 6.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. III, G.

6. *Ib.*, Pl. V, C.





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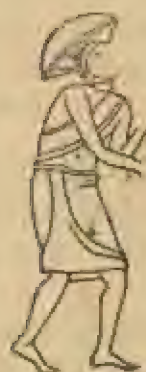
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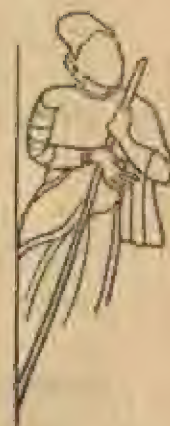
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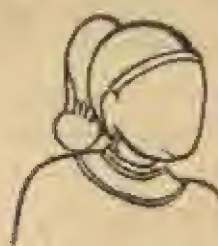
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'kamarband' was passed through two rings worn near the navel (Fig. 5).<sup>1</sup> The soldiers at times wore a turban, full-sleeved tunic and 'dhoti' (Fig. 6).<sup>2</sup>

In one place<sup>3</sup> the back-view of a man worshipping Buddha is represented. It shows how the end of the 'dhoti' was looped and tucked in behind. It also shows how a rosette-like clasp with a string attached to the head-ornament held the latter to its place (Fig. 7).

#### Dress of the Brāhmaṇas :

The Brāhmaṇas generally wore a loin-cloth with one end tucked in at the side.<sup>4</sup> A 'dupaṭṭā' was passed transversely over the chest (Fig. 8).

#### Costume of the Chamberlain :

The chamberlain ('pratibārin') is represented wearing a full-sleeved tunic, a tall cap, and 'dupaṭṭā' passed transversely over the chest (Fig. 9).<sup>5</sup>

#### Dress of the Women :

The women in the Goli reliefs wear a very thin 'sāri' wrapped round the waist. The hair is arranged in coiffures with head-ornaments. In one place, however, a woman wears what appears to be a cap (Fig. 10).<sup>6</sup>

## VII

Archaeology elucidates certain problems of the costumes of the Gupta period which the contemporary texts have left unexplained or only partially explained. The sculptures however of the Gupta period are not as helpful as the earlier reliefs of Bharhut, Sāñci, Amarāvati, Nāgārjunī-Koṇḍa and Goli for the study of the life and manners of the people, and incidentally, the costumes worn by the different classes and the foreigners. This partial neglect of the representation of the material aspects of society may be attributed to the new conception of art which divorcing itself from the early realistic tendencies enters the domain of aesthetics. (The art of this period becomes a vehicle of the deep religious meditation and contemplation which are the characteristics of both

1. *Ib.*, Pl. IV.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. IV.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. IX. 3.

4. *Pl.* VI. F.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. II. E.

6. *Ib.*, Pl. III. G.



Brāhmanism and Buddhism : what the art of sculpture loses in drawing away from realism it gains in aesthetic qualities. In the sculptures of the Gupta period we see the beginning of that hieratic art which with its own symbols, costumes and ornaments was destined to endure for a thousand years, and as the years rolled by, the symbols became definitely associated with the images of different gods and goddesses as laid down in the Śilpaśāstras. Fortunately for the students of the social history these rules were largely confined to the stone sculptures only ; the wall painters still continued in the way of their ancestors whereby their works became the mirror of contemporary life and culture. The artists of Ajanṭā effected a compromise between the ancient realism and the new principles of aesthetics. The Ajanṭā paintings are a veritable encyclopaedia of the costumes of the Gupta age. Our knowledge of the textile materials however is based entirely on literary references. So far the spade of the archaeologist has not unearthed any textile material. The paintings of Ajanṭā, however, show the wealth of sewn materials with striped or floral patterns, and the craft of tailoring which had come permanently to stay in Indian culture.

The coins of the Gupta period, distinguished for their historical and artistic value, are also of great assistance in giving us details of the royal costumes of the period. In their minute portraits the dice-makers have preserved for us such details of the costumes which even the wall painters of the period have neglected.

#### Saka and other Foreign Influences :

Centuries before the establishment of the Gupta power North Western India was subject to the foreign rule of the Sakas, Indo-Greeks and the Kuṣāṇas. The contact of foreign and indigenous culture in different walks of life was conducive to an understanding of the mutual points of view. The opening of the gates of Central Asia by the Sakas and the Kuṣāṇas brought India in contact with the rich culture of China. In the Gupta age the vast expansion of Indian culture beyond the limits of the country made India a centre of many Asiatic nationalities. In the paintings of Ajanṭā men of different nationalities—Indians, Afghans, Central Asians, etc.—dressed in the picturesque garbs of their countries paying their respects to the Buddha, have been represented. This crowd



of pilgrims and traders dressed in the characteristic garments of their countries must have to a certain extent influenced the costumes of India. It is evident from Bāna that new fashions, especially in sewn garments, had come into vogue in the seventh century. This may have been due to the contact of Indian culture with Iran, Afghanistan and also China. This makes the paintings of Ajanṭā also a treasure-house for the study of the costumes of the people of neighbouring countries.

#### The Conventional Costume of the Bodhisattvas at Ajanṭā :

The coins of the Gupta age and the Ajanṭā paintings are our best sources of information about the costume of the kings and noblemen. At Ajanṭā the royal personages are usually depicted wearing a 'dhoti' and their headdresses are elaborate diadems. The turban rarely appears. In the coins, however, the Gupta kings are represented wearing 'dhoti' and 'dupaṭṭā' as well as tunics and trousers. The turban is also worn, but the king going bare-headed seems to have been an usual sight. This difference in the costumes of the kings as represented in the Ajanṭā paintings and in the coins may be attributed to the deified nature of the Bodhisattvas depicted at Ajanṭā. Herein one may notice the beginning of those medieval traditions with formulated sets of rules for constructing the images of gods. The over-elaborate diadems of the kings as represented at Ajanṭā seem to be a step towards that direction; contemporary literature is strangely silent about them. The Bodhisattvas at Ajanṭā with their very elaborate ornaments and tall bejewelled diadems are of one class with the images of Viṣṇu of later date, and hence their costume and ornaments do not necessarily represent the actual costumes and ornaments of the kings of that period. In the 'Harṣacarita', as pointed out elsewhere, the king's costume though made of the best materials was far from showy. This difference in the representation of the kings at Ajanṭā and in the Gupta coins enhances the value of the latter from the point of view of the history of costume. In the following pages a description of the costumes of the kings in the Gupta age as revealed by the contemporary paintings and coins is given.

#### Costumes of the Kings on their Coins : I. Samudragupta

In the standard type of coins Samudragupta is represented as



wearing a half-sleeved tunic (coat ?) with the pointed ends hanging, and the front is embroidered with beads on both sides (Fig. 11).<sup>1</sup> In most of the coins only two pointed ends of the tunic are shown, but in one of the standard type coins<sup>2</sup> all the four ends are shown. It could be compared with the tunic worn by the Saka warrior at Mathurā.<sup>3</sup> Samudragupta wears trousers not of the loose variety of the 'shalwār' type but of the 'cūṛidār' type, tight-fitting and creased. His head is covered with a close-fitting cap.

On the other coins of the standard type<sup>4</sup> the tunic is full-sleeved, not tight fitting but loose and folded near the wrists (Fig. 12). The breeches or may be the 'jaṅghā' type of boots are decorated with a vertical series of round plaques or possibly buttons.

In the third variety of the same type the half-sleeved tunic is combined with tight-fitting shorts ('jāghīā') or a loin-cloth. The full boots ('khallakā' type, see Section V) reaching a little below the knees have their seams decorated with round plaques (Fig. 13).<sup>5</sup>

In the Tiger type of coins the king wears a tight-fitting tunic with rolled up sleeves, twisted 'kamarband', 'dhoti' or shorts reaching the ankles and a turban of Kuṣāna type decorated with a plaque (Fig. 14).<sup>6</sup>

In the Candragupta I and Kumāradevi type, Candragupta wears a coat with pointed ends. Its neck is beaded and tasseled, and there is a row of buttons and fasteners in the centre (Fig. 15).<sup>7</sup> The trousers are creased; the boots are of 'ardhakhallakā' type (see Section V).

From the Lyrist type of Samudragupta's coins<sup>8</sup> it is evident that the Gupta kings while relaxing from the onerous duties of the state or while enjoying music put on a simple waist-cloth and a close-fitting cap (Fig. 16). That this simple dress was preferred by the Gupta kings in their private life is further supported by the Couch type coins of Candragupta II<sup>9</sup> in

1. Allan, 'Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasty and of Śaśāṅka, King of Gaṇḍa', London, 1914 Pl. I, 11.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. I, 5.

3. See Agrawala, 'Handbook of the Curzon Museum of Archaeology', Pl. XXI, also Moti Chandra, 'The History of Indian Costume from the 1st. Century to the beginning of the 4th. Century', 'Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art', 1940, p. 230.

4. Allan, *loc. cit.*, Pl. I, 11-13.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. I, 14-17.

7. *Ib.*, Pl. II, 14. See Moti Chandra, *loc. cit.*, Figs. 59-60.

8. *Ib.*, Pl. III, 1.

9. *Ib.*, Pl. V.





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which the king sitting at ease on a high-backed couch holding a flower in his uplifted right hand wears a simple loin-cloth.

## 2. Candragupta II

In the Archer type of coins<sup>1</sup> King Candragupta II wears a tunic at times secured tight at the waist by a 'kamarband' with an elaborate loop on the left and the ends falling on the ground (Fig. 17). In another variety of the Archer type<sup>2</sup> the king's dress is simplified to a 'jāghīā' or close-fitting shorts in combination with a 'kamarband' looped and tied on the right.

In a Lion Slayer type<sup>3</sup> coin the king wears besides a tunic, a 'kamarband', waist-cloth and a helmet with a boss at the top (Fig. 18). Another variety of this helmet (Fig. 19)<sup>4</sup> is with a beaded decoration at the top.

Candragupta II in the Horseman type of coins<sup>5</sup> is usually represented as riding a fully caparisoned horse. His costume is made up<sup>6</sup> of a waist-cloth girt with long sashes fluttering behind (Fig. 20). But at times while riding a horse the king wore a tunic held tight at the waist with a 'kamarband', and a waist-cloth<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 21).

In one of the copper coins<sup>8</sup> Candragupta II standing at ease at what appears to be a balcony wears a scarf ('dupaṭṭā') over his shoulders, one end of which he holds daintily in his left hand (Fig. 22).

## 3. Kumāragupta I

In the time of Kumāragupta I when the Gupta empire attains its maturity a definite national costume is evolved, which discards the trousers and high-boots, etc., vestiges of the Kuṣāṇa costume. Kumāragupta I is generally represented as wearing a tight-fitting tunic with pointed ends and a waist-cloth usually reaching the knees<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 23), but at times reaching the ankles.<sup>10</sup> No cap is worn, its place is being taken by an elaborate coiffure; the waist-band is generally looped and tied on the left with the ends fluttering by the side.<sup>11</sup>

1. *Ib.*, Pl. VI, 8-9.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. VI, 10-11.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. VII, 18.

4. Pl. VIII, 11.

5. Pl. VIII, 12.

6. *Ib.*, Pls. IX, X.

7. *Ib.*, Pl. X.

8. *Ib.*, Pl. X, 9.

9. *Ib.*, Pl. XI, 11.

10. *Ib.*, Pl. XII, 4.





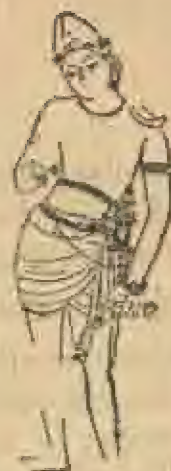
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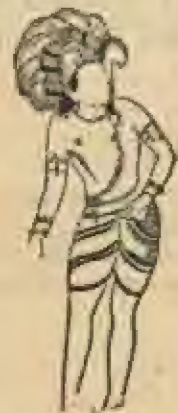
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In the silver coins of Kumāragupta<sup>1</sup> the only interesting point in the costume is the close-fitting cap or bound turban<sup>2</sup> with upturned brim which reminds us of the Saka caps in Mathurā sculptures (Fig. 24).<sup>3</sup>

#### Costumes of the Kings at Ajanṭā :

At Ajanṭā usually the kings or the high dignitaries wear a very simple costume—the loin-cloth, at times completed with a scarf. The simplicity of the costume is amply compensated by the diadems of exquisite workmanship and jewellery. It is doubtful whether diadems of such complicated design existed in actual use, contemporary literature does not describe them. The portrait coins of the period also do not vouchsafe their use. The possibility is that the diadems of simple designs were actually used, while those with very intricate workmanship were meant for the use of the gods. In Ajanṭā such diadems and tiaras are generally worn by the Bodhisattvas.

In one of the Ajanṭā paintings<sup>4</sup> King Bimbisāra wears a white, red and blue striped loin-cloth with a tasseled waist-band. The headdress consists of a turban or cap with neatly piled folds surmounted by a flamboyant 'sarpench' with a circular disc on each side (Fig. 25).

The King of Benares represented at Ajanṭā<sup>5</sup> wears a loin-cloth of very thin material. It is secured to the waist with a belt; the end of the 'paṭkā' falls to the ground. On his left shoulder is a narrow striped scarf. The tall cap is studded with rosettes and stars (Fig. 26).

In another place<sup>6</sup> the king wears a striped 'dhoti' with one of the panels decorated with regularly placed thick vertical lines. The headdress is perhaps a metallic cap with round discs on the flanks and the top (Fig. 27).

In the Viśvantara Jātaka<sup>7</sup>, Prince Viśvantara while coming out of the palace wears a half-sleeved tight-fitting scarlet tunic, 'dhoti' with a 'kamarband' and a soft, conical cap (Fig. 28). In the same painting seated

1. *Ib.*, Pl. XII, 8.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. XV, 6.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. XVI, 5.

4. Herringham, 'Ajanṭā Frescoes', Pl. I, 1 : Cave XVII.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. XXV, 31.

6. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXII, 94, Cave XVII.

7. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXIII, 26, Cave XVII.



in the palace and distributing alms to the Brāhmanas he wears an elaborate 'mukuta', tight half-sleeved tunic covering the chest, and decorated with a tasseled rosette on the sleeves, a twisted 'dupattā' worn like the sacred thread ('yajñopavīta'), a short loin-cloth and a belt whose ends fall down gracefully ( Fig. 29 ).

In another painting<sup>1</sup> a prince riding a horse wears a full-sleeved tunic, short 'dhoti', and a 'kamarband' with a dagger ( Fig. 30 ).

In one of the Bāgh paintings<sup>2</sup> the king is shown wearing a striped 'dhoti' and an elaborate square crown ( Fig. 31 ). The crown of the other person in the same scene<sup>3</sup> is triangular in shape ( Fig. 32 ).

The conventional representation of the king's costume is best illustrated in the costume of Padmapāni.<sup>4</sup> The jewellery is not profuse but select in type. Apparently the Rājas as depicted at Ajantā are without an upper garment. His loin-cloth is made of striped silk; the white registers between the stripes are often hachured ( Fig. 33 ).

In another place<sup>5</sup> the figure of Avalokiteśvara is draped in a red and green striped 'dhoti' held in position with a delicate chain belt; the elaborate headdress in the shape of three arches is studded with jewels and profusely chased with elaborate designs ( Fig. 34 ).

Another king in Cave I<sup>6</sup> wears a waist-cloth decorated with stripes and ladders. The end of the 'dupattā' falls between his legs. The jewellery he wears is very elegant. There is a sort of strap, perhaps attached to the wall, through which he has put his left hand in a reposeful attitude ( Fig. 35 ). The hair is covered with ribbons.

In Cave I a Nāgarāja is shown wearing what appears to be a crown of delicate workmanship, a striped 'dhoti' and a belt tied in several rounds on the right ( Fig. 36 ).<sup>7</sup>

In Cave XVII<sup>7</sup> a prince wears a 'mukuta' of very elaborate workmanship, and 'dhoti' with a belt. The ends of the 'kamarband' hang down ( Fig. 37 ).

1. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. VIII ( 10 ), Cave XVII.

2. Marshall and Others, *The Bāgh Caves*, London, 1927. Pl. B.

3. *Ib.*

4. Taadani, *'Ajanta'*, part I, Pls. XXIV, Cave I : Herringham, Pl. XI, 18.

5. Herringham, *loc. cit.*, Pl. X, 19. Cave I.

6. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. X : 12.

7. Griffiths, *'Ajanta'*, Vol. I.





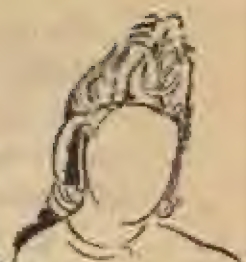
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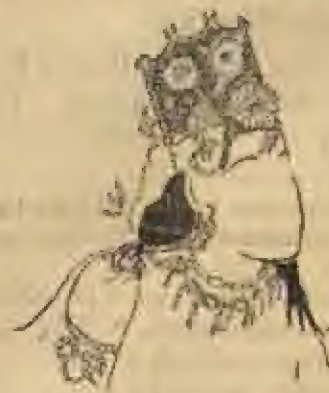
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### A Foreign King :

A king of foreign origin, probably Iranian,<sup>1</sup> seated on a diwan, wears a long coat of pale blue broad-cloth, the collar, armbands and cuffs of which are of lighter colour and probably embroidered. The cap is hemispherical and tasseled. He wears soft leather boots ( Fig. 38 ).<sup>2</sup>

Any description of the costume of the princes in the Ajanta paintings would be inadequate without mentioning their headdresses of exquisite workmanship, though it is doubtful whether such headdresses were actually in use. We give below the description of choice specimens.

The headdress of a prince in Cave XVII<sup>3</sup> is conical with slightly curved sides. The decoration consists of medallions, beads and flowers. It is profusely set with jewels ( Fig. 39 ).

Another headdress of a prince in Cave XVII<sup>4</sup> is flamboyant and seems to be attached to a turban ( Fig. 40 ).<sup>5</sup>

In Cave XVII<sup>6</sup> the princes wear two remarkable headdresses. A conical headdress is profusely set with jewels and pearl chains are attached to it ( Fig. 41 ). In another headdress slightly triangular in shape there are crescents and circle decorations. Pearl strings are attached to it and the projecting sides are scalloped ( Fig. 42 ).

In Cave I<sup>7</sup> the prince wears a triangular diadem of very elaborate workmanship. The decoration consists of circles, fully expanded flowers, rosettes within circles, etc. It is tied at the back with ribbons whose ends are visible ( Fig. 43 ).

In Cave I<sup>8</sup> the headdress of the prince is made of a broad band divided into compartments and set with jewels. The band is mounted with projections, two of which are visible. The shape of one is similar to a 'caitya' window surmounted with three 'amalakis'. The central

1. Yashwanth, loc. cit., L Pl. XXXIX ( Fig. 38 ).

2. *Ib.*, p. 50.

3. Herringham, Pl. XVI, 13.

4. Herringham, Pl. XXXIX ( 43 ).

5. *Ib.*, Pl. XXIV, 36.

6. *Ib.*, Pl. XXVI, 38.

7. *Ib.*, Pl. XI, 13.

8. *Ib.*, Pl. XIV, 16.



projection is roughly triangular in shape and decorated with a rosette (Fig. 44).

The diadem of another prince in Cave I<sup>1</sup> may be described as triangular with meandering sides. It is decorated with flowers and jewelled panels and is flanked with round discs. Pearl strings are attached from the discs to the top of the diadem. It is also tied at the back with ribbons (Fig. 45).

In Cave II<sup>2</sup> the headdress is close-fitting like a cap, surmounted however with a spiralic decoration on the left and also with a full blown lotus (Fig. 46).

The headdress of a prince in cave IX<sup>3</sup> is cylindrical with a meander-top. It is decorated with beaded circles and two full blown flowers (Fig. 47).

#### Summary:

The costumes of the kings and princes depicted in Gupta coins and Ajanta paintings thus were as follows :

A. After the fashion of the Saka rulers the kings wore a tunic with loose sleeves folded half way, with pointed ends, trousers not of the loose 'shalwār' type but of 'cūridār' type, and a close-fitting cap. The loose-sleeved tunic was often rolled up at the wrists. The sleeves and breeches were frequently decorated with a vertical series of round plaques or possibly buttons. Sometimes a 'jāghīā' was worn in combination with the tunic and full boots decorated with round plaques. Sometimes the king wore a tunic with rolled up sleeves in combination with a 'dhotī' reaching the ankles, a twisted 'kamarband' and a turban of Kuṣāṇa type. In the Candragupta I and Kumāradevi type of coins the king is represented as wearing a coat with buttons and fasteners in the centre.

B. At the time of relaxation the king ordinarily wore a simple 'dhotī' and a close-fitting cap.

C. In Candragupta II's time the tunic is often secured with a 'kamarband' with a loop on the left and the ends falling on the ground. Elsewhere the king is represented wearing a 'jāghīā' with the combination of a 'kamarband' looped and tied on the right.

In the Lion Slayer type coins the costume of the king generally has a tunic, waist-band and a helmet.

1. *Tb.*, Pl. XV, 8.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. XI, 49.

3. Griffiths, 'Ajanta', Vol. I.



D. In the time of Kumāragupta I a national costume seems to have been evolved, which discards the trousers and boots. The king is generally shown wearing a tight-fitting tunic and 'kamarband' and a short 'dhoti'.

E. In Ajantā, however, the king rarely wears any sewn garment. This may be due, as already observed, to the setting up of a convention in art by which the gods have a costume distinct from that of man.

The costumes of the soldiers, state officers, chieftains, servants, dancers, etc., will now be described.

#### Costumes of the Horsemen :

In Cave I, Ajantā<sup>1</sup>, a horseman conversing with a 'yogi' is depicted ( Fig. 48 ). He wears a full-sleeved tunic on which appear black dots reminding us of the application of 'agaru' paste to the tunic, as mentioned by Bāṇa.<sup>2</sup> The ends of the 'dupaṭṭā' flutter at the back, and the hair is tied with a ribbon.

In the painting depicting the Battle of Ceylon<sup>3</sup> the cavalrymen wear half-sleeved tight-fitting jackets covering the chest only and close-fitting shorts. The sleeves and necks seem to be embroidered ( Fig. 49 ).

In another scene in Cave XVII<sup>4</sup> the two riders wear tunics with V-shaped neck. The shading on the collars indicates that perhaps they were made of fur. The cap of the horseman on the left is dome-shaped with a crenellated up-turned rim and bow at the top ( Fig. 50 ). From their dress and general physiognomy they appear to be either of Iranian or Hun extraction.

In another scene in Cave XVII<sup>5</sup> one of the two horsemen in the foreground to the left wears a full sleeved white coat open in front, while his companion has a full-sleeved tight tunic with pointed ends, trousers and full boots ( Fig. 51 ). The nature of an upper garment whose one end is visible cannot however be determined.

1. Herringham, *loc. cit.*, Pl. VI, 8.

2. 'Harṣacarita', Tr. Cowell, p. 16.

3. Herringham, *loc. cit.*, Pl. XVII, 19.

4. Herringham, Pl. XXII, 24.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. VIII, 10.





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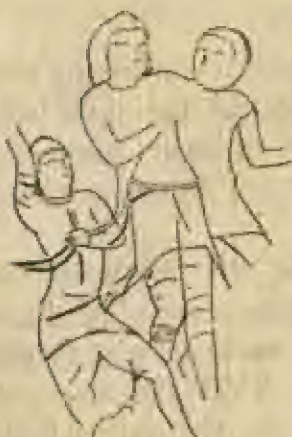
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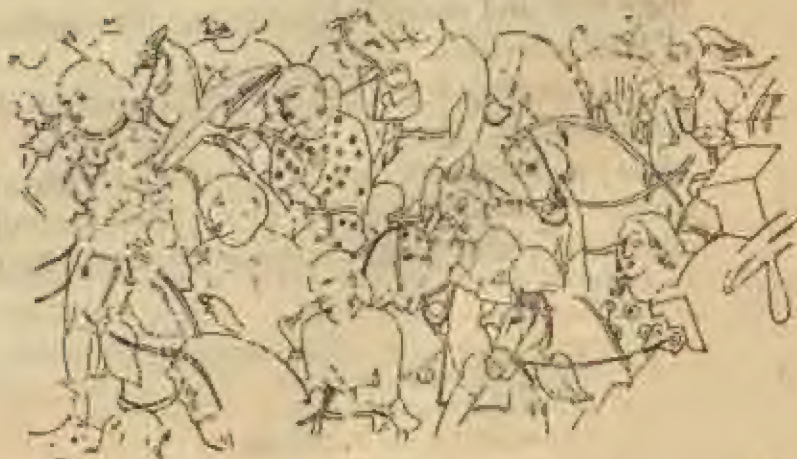
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In one of the paintings in Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> depicting the 'Mātripoṣaka Jātaka' in the foreground to the left is a rider who wears a pale indigo blue full-sleeved coat with a very broad collar (Fig. 52).

It is however at Bagh that we find the fullest representation of the cavalry with its members dressed in tunics of varied patterns. In Plate F of 'The Bagh Caves' (Fig. 53)<sup>2</sup> a cavalcade of at least seventeen horsemen is seen moving towards the left in five or six rows. The chief person who seems to be the cavalier in the middle wears a blue dotted yellowish tunic. On the right of the principal figure another rider wears a greenish tunic made of chequered cloth with a flower in the centre of each compartment. It is difficult to say whether the chequers represent some pattern or the cross stitches of a thick padded tunic. If the latter be true, than this particular kind of tunic may represent the ancient 'vārabāṇa' or some such article of wear. Above this figure a rider on a green horse wears a yellowish tunic. To the left of the chief personage rides a man in a yellowish tunic; the man next to him wears an ochre-coloured coat and yellowish cap relieved with little blue ornaments. The vanguard is made up of three soldiers, two on horseback and a third on foot. One of the horsemen wears a yellow tunic decorated with patterns somewhat resembling birds in shape.

The third row is made up of four horsemen. One of them wears a blue tunic with a V-shaped opening at the neck and yellow trousers. The person riding to his right wears a yellow robe dotted over with small lozenges, a very common motif in tie-dyed fabrics, known as 'pulaka-bandha' in Bāṇa's time.

The tunic of the first man of the four riders making up the rear is yellow. The tunic of the second is striped and that of the third blue. The fourth wears a white robe marked with rosettes over what appears to be a full-sleeved blue jacket.

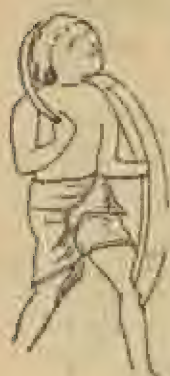
All the persons of this stately cavalcade wear long-sleeved tunics reaching half way down the thighs and a curious kind of headdress

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1. Copy in the Prince of Wales Museum.

2. Marshall, loc. cit.

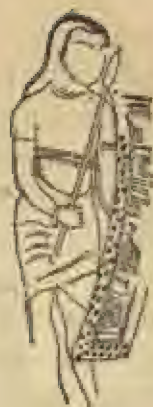




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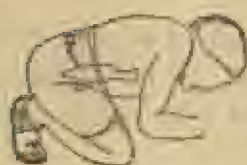
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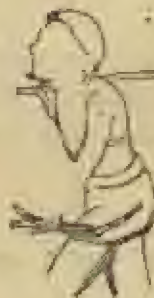
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usually white or yellow and sometimes relieved with blue flowerets and hanging down from the back of the head. The picture recalls to our mind the description of the chieftains on horses accompanying Harṣa in the 'Harṣacarita' of Bāṇa.<sup>1</sup>

#### Elephant Drivers :

The elephant drivers were often dressed in short half-sleeved jackets decorated with plain borders on the V-shaped neck, the lower part and the sleeve ends (Fig. 54) and shorts.<sup>2</sup> They wore however often also full-sleeved tunics. At one place in Cave XVII<sup>3</sup> the elephant driver wears a full-sleeved tunic, his hair being covered with a scarf or close-fitting skull-cap (Fig. 55). Elephant drivers as represented in Bagh paintings have golden striped shorts with the rest of the body devoid of any clothing.<sup>4</sup>

#### Costume of the Foot-soldiers :

In one of the paintings of Cave XVII<sup>5</sup> the soldiers are dressed in a short waist-cloth (Fig. 56) : sometimes scarves are tied round their heads (Fig. 57). In Cave XVII, in the Battle of Ceylon,<sup>6</sup> a typical foot-soldier is dressed in a loin-cloth and half-sleeved tight-fitting jacket covering the chest only, whose round neck, buttons and sleeve are braided ; the hair is tied with a strip of cloth (Fig. 58).

In Cave XVII<sup>7</sup> a sword-bearer is shown wearing a half-sleeved tight tunic with pointed ends reaching the knees ; the waist is tied with a 'kamarband' (Fig. 59). In the same scene the spear-bearer wears a half-sleeved tunic and also the sword-bearer ; his 'kamarband' however is tied in two rounds (Fig. 60). In Cave I<sup>8</sup> a soldier wears a tunic made of material decorated with a leaf pattern. In Cave 1 a shield-bearer<sup>9</sup> proceeding from the left wears a scarf covering the shoulders and knotted in front.

1. 'Harṣacarita', p. 202 ; for other references to the costume of the riders, see Section I.

2. Yashanti, loc. cit., Part II, Pl. XIV.

3. Herringham, Pl. XIX, 21.

4. Marshall, loc. cit., Pl. II.

5. Herringham, loc. cit., Pl. VIII, 10.

6. *Ib.*, Pl. XVII, 19.

7. *Ib.*, Pl. XXXVIII, 40.

8. Yashanti, loc. cit., Part I, Pl. XIV.

9. *Ib.*, Pl. XIV.



### Costumes of the Kings and Nobles in the Battlefield :

The princes the kings in the battlefield as depicted in the Battle of Ceylon<sup>1</sup> wear a tight half-sleeved tunic and an elaborate headdress made of a combination of turban and 'sarpench' ( Fig. 61 ).

### Costumes of Hunters and Trappers :

Ordinary hunters and trappers as depicted in the 'Mātṛpoṣaka Jātaka' in Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> wear short 'dhotis'; their hair is bound with a ribbon. In the representation of the 'Chaddanta Jātaka' in the same cave<sup>3</sup> the trappers who appear to be members of some wild tribe wear shorts with belts to which small daggers are attached ( Fig. 62 ). Very interesting is the design of the 'chappal' worn by one of the trappers paying his obeisance to the captured elephant ( Fig. 63 ). A typical forester with a stick, bows and arrows wearing a waistcloth is also seen in the same painting ( Fig. 64 ). In the 'Śaṅkhapāla Jātaka'<sup>4</sup> on the right, a hunter dragging a serpent by means of a rope wears a chequered loin-cloth ( Fig. 65 ); the design on the loin-cloth of another hunter is also interesting—the dark brown stripes being decorated with arrow-headlike designs or, may be, flying birds in singles and doubles ( Fig. 66 ).

### Hunting Costume :

The hunting costume of men of position was however quite different. In Cave XVII<sup>5</sup> the hunter on the ground holding the bow wears a half-sleeved tight jacket opening in front and reaching to the waist. Over this he wears a white full-sleeved tunic reaching half-way to the thighs; its lower edges seem to be trimmed with a gold border. He also has white trousers and boots ( Fig. 51 ). His companion is clad in a tunic with pointed ends. Over the tunic some other garment is worn of which one pointed end is visible.

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1. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XVII, 19. Cave XVII.
  2. Copy in the Prince of Wales Museum; Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XX, 29.
  3. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXVII, 29.
  4. Yashani, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. I, Pl. XI.
  5. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. VIII, 19.



### Costume of the Chamberlain :

In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> the black coloured chamberlain wears a flat turban of twisted cloth. Over the white full-sleeved tunic a 'chādar' is passed transversely across the chest. It is decorated with a fish-scale pattern ( Fig. 67 ).

In the painting of the Lustration of the King, in Cave I<sup>2</sup>, an old chamberlain is depicted. He wears a long full-sleeved tunic with a V-shaped neck; the skirt of the tunic is gathered and tucked in in the 'kamarband'; he also wears a red-striped waist-cloth ( Fig. 68 ).

### Costume of the Ministers of State :

The minister of state depicted in one of the paintings of Cave XVII<sup>3</sup> wears a white full-sleeved tunic and 'chādar'. His head is uncovered. Apparently he wears full boots of 'khallakā' type ( Fig. 69 ). In the 'Śibi Jātaka' in the scene depicting the king in agony after he had parted with his eyes to Indra there is a minister or may be nobleman wearing a half-sleeved jacket with the sleeves embroidered with circles and chequers and trimmed with pearls over which a 'dupaṭṭā' is thrown transversely. Another twisted scarf with a central clasp is worn like a 'yajñopavīta'. A ribbon to which flowers are stuck is tied round the hair ( Fig. 70 ).

### Costumes of Chieftains and People of Higher Social Status :

As the costume of the kings was extremely simple except for the head-dress of elaborate workmanship, that of chieftains or highly placed people was similar but for the very elaborately worked headdresses, which seem to have been used exclusively by the kings and princes of royal blood. The simplicity of this class of costume however is amply compensated by the artistic mode of wearing it. In the following paragraphs an attempt will be made to give a picture of the costumes of this class and the modes of wearing them.

1. *Ib.*, Pl. XXV, 28.

2. *Herringham, Loc. cit.*, Pl. XII, 14.

3. *Herringham, Ib.*, Pl. XXV, 27.

4. *Herringham, Ib.*, Pl. XXXIX, 47. Cave XVII.

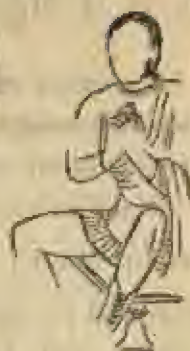




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In one of the terracotta plaques from Mīrpurkhas<sup>1</sup> a nobleman of the Gupta period is depicted ( Fig. 71 ). He wears what appears to be shorts over which a 'dhoti' is wrapped so that the front reaches only the knee while the back part reaches a little above the ankles. A loose twisted 'kamarband' is tied round the waist with its two knotted ends hanging on the left. The wrapping of the waist-cloth over the shorts appears to have been a common practice in this age. Thus a nobleman depicted in Cave XVII at Ajaṇṭā<sup>2</sup> is shown wearing a short waist-band over the shorts, the right end of which peeps out of the waist-band cover ( Fig. 72 ). The neatly tied 'paṭkā' has its ends hanging down to the ground on the left. A scarf with a clasp is worn like a 'yajñopavīta' across the chest. This may be the 'vaikakṣya'.

In the now headless statue of Śiva from the Samlaji Hills, Idar State<sup>3</sup>, the costume is typically that of a man of status. The 'dhoti' reaches a little above the ankles with the pleated end falling gracefully in front. The twisted 'kamarband' at the waist is arranged in three loops. The ends of the 'kamarband' seem to be pleated and visible on both sides ( Fig. 73 ). In another image of Śiva from Idar State<sup>4</sup> Śiva's 'dhoti' reaching the ankles is tied with a belt. A loose 'kamarband' encircles the thighs ( Fig. 74 ). At Mandor in Jodhpur State<sup>5</sup> on a pillar on which is depicted the episode of Kṛṣṇa lifting Govardhana Kṛṣṇa wears a 'dhoti' reaching a little above the ankle ( Fig. 75 ). It is fixed with a belt to which is attached a 'kamarband' with meandering folds in front, and which is looped and knotted on the right.

In the famous Varāha relief in Cave No. 5 of Udayagiri in Gwalior State the Ocean-god ( Samudra ) is appropriately dressed like a nobleman of the period.<sup>6</sup> Besides 'dhoti' and 'dupaṭṭā' covering the shoulders he wears a turban with a heart-shaped decorative plaque reminiscent of

1. A.S.I., Ann. Rep., 1900-10, Pl. XXVIII ( b ).

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XLI, 55.

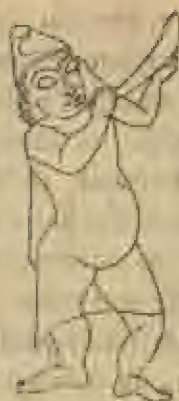
3. Insamdar, 'Some Archaeological Finds in the Idar State', Pl. I, 1. Ahmedabad, 1926.

4. *Ib.*, Pl. II, 5.

5. A.S.I., Ann. Rep., 1903-1906, p. 138.

6. 'Ann. Rep. of the Archaeological Department', Gwalior State 1923-29, Pl. V.

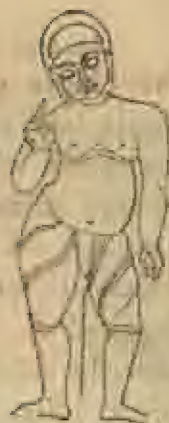




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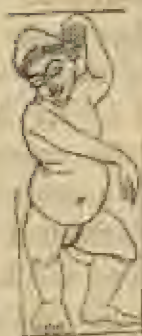
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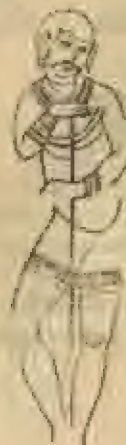
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the Kuṣāṇa period turban in Mathurā sculptures. In the image of Avalokiteśvara from Sārnāth<sup>1</sup> the graceful manner is notable of wearing a simple attire such as 'dhoti' and 'kamarband'. Avalokiteśvara's lower part is covered by a 'dhoti', the pleated end of which hangs down between the feet. It is secured to the waist with a richly jewelled belt tied into a loop below the navel. Over the waist we notice a twisted scarf passed round the thighs in a loose fashion and tied up in a knot behind the right forearm, the ends falling down gracefully along the right leg ( Fig. 76 ).

In Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> in the 'Question of Sāriputra' a nobleman or a high dignitary of the state is depicted on the left. He wears a vertically striped 'dhoti' and 'chādar' covering the chest and passed over the left shoulder. The neat little spiral-shaped turban is flanked with a golden disc decorated with a rosette ( Fig. 77 ).

An image of Mañjuśrī from Sārnāth dating back to the end of the seventh century<sup>3</sup> is dressed in a 'dhoti' reaching below the knees with one end pleated and tucked in on the left. There is an elaborate chain round the waist and a belt is worn over the navel whose rope-like ends are passed through a ring and hang on the right thigh ( Fig. 78 ).

#### Costumes of Musicians :

In the reliefs at Bhumara, a temple of the Gupta period,<sup>4</sup> a musician playing the trumpet wears a conical cap tilted at the top, a tunic with pointed ends reaching below the knees and trousers ( Fig. 79 ).<sup>5</sup> Another musician playing on an hour-glass-shaped drum wears a conical cap, a coat embroidered in front and trousers ( Fig. 80 ).<sup>6</sup> The singer appears to be dressed in a half-sleeved jacket<sup>7</sup> and a 'dhoti' tucked in behind ( Fig. 81 ).

1. Sahni, 'Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sarnath', Pl. XIII (b), p. 118.

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XLII, 56.

3. Sahni, *Loc. cit.*, pp. 120-121, Pl. XIII, C.

4. Banerjee, 'The Śiva Temples at Bhumara', *Mem. Arch. Sur. India.*, Calcutta, 1924.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. X.

6. *Ib.*

7. *Ib.*



Another musician playing a 'surnai' type of instrument wears a slightly conical cap (Fig. 82). The drummer's cap is hemispherical (Fig. 83). The dancer's cap has a fringed end (Fig. 84').

In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> the musician with folded hands in the flying group wears a waist-cloth with grey and white stripes; the 'kamarband' matching the waist-cloth is pleasingly decorated with grey and green stripes. Another musician in the same cave<sup>2</sup> wears a loin-cloth decorated with green meanders on white ground.

The most interesting costume of a male musician is however that of a 'vinā' player who carries his instrument on his shoulder.<sup>3</sup> He wears the usual 'dhoti' held secure with a 'kamarband' and belt. A scarf is tied round the neck. The free ends of the 'kamarband' and the scarf flutter in the wind. Garlands are tied round the hair dressed in topknots (Fig. 85).

#### Costumes of Door-keepers :

The door-keepers in the Gupta age wore their costume sewn or otherwise beautifully arranged. Thus the 'Dvārapāla' in Cave No. 6 at Udayagiri has a simple 'dhoti' with the pleated end hanging in front and held to the waist with a belt knotted below the navel. He wears his 'kamarband' very gracefully, parts of it being passed around the waist and arranged in fan-shape on each side of the waist (Fig. 86).<sup>4</sup>

At Ajantā, however, the door-keepers are often shown wearing sewn garments. Thus in Cave I<sup>5</sup> the door-keeper has a long-sleeved tunic of white and black checks which is tightened round the belt by a broad girdle. In Cave I<sup>6</sup> behind Uggasena, stands a guard wearing a peaked cap with upturned brim (Fig. 87) and a long coat with tight sleeves; the coat seems to have been made of silk; it has a pale ground bearing floral patterns. This, according to Yazdani, could be 'kimkhab'.<sup>7</sup> In

1. Heringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. II, 2.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. II.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. XXXVI, 40.

4. 'Ann. Report Arch. Dept. Gwalior State', 1929-30, Pl. B, Cave No. 6.

5. Yazdani *Loc. cit.*, Part I, Pl. I.

6. *Ib.*, Pl. XXXV.

7. Yazdani, *Ib.*, Part I, p. 13, fig. 2.

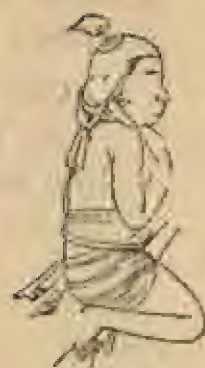




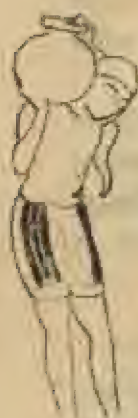
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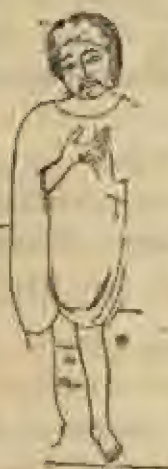
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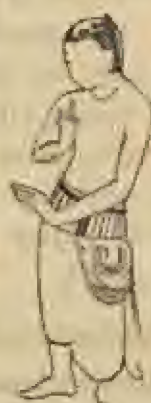
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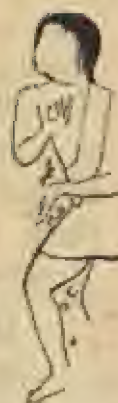
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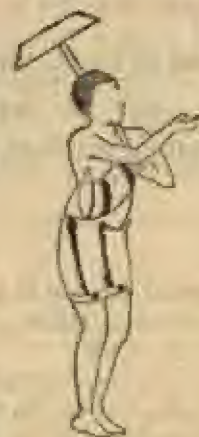
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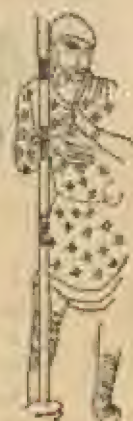
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Cave II the guard wears an embroidered coat with tight sleeves reaching a little below the hips (Fig. 88).

#### Costumes of the Royal Attendants :

The royal servants and attendants at Ajantā are generally depicted wearing sewn garments or the simple 'dhoti'. In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> an attendant on the left side of the Buddha wears a loin-cloth with 'chārkhāna' pattern (Fig. 89). In Cave I<sup>2</sup> in the famous Avalokiteśvara painting, the attendant with the flower tray wears a tunic with deep brown stripes and a tiara of very delicate workmanship (Fig. 90). A man-servant depicted in Cave I<sup>3</sup> wears a tunic on which a very complex pattern is worked out. The patterns are treated in bands and consist of rosettes, circles within compartments and chevron (Fig. 91). In another scene in Cave I<sup>4</sup> the attendant seated on the ground wears a tunic made of silver brocade with floral designs worked out in dark brown (Fig. 92).

While following their lords on war or in procession the attendants wore costumes appropriate to the occasion. Thus an attendant seated behind an elephant<sup>5</sup> in the 'Battle of Ceylon' wears a plumed helmet, short half-sleeved jacket and short 'dhoti' tied at the waist with a 'kamarband' (Fig. 93).

#### Dress of the Bathroom-attendant :

The bathroom-attendant depicted in Cave I<sup>6</sup> wears a short red striped 'dhoti' and over it a thin covering cloth ; the head is covered with a scarf (Fig. 94).

#### Dress of the Common People :

We have so far been describing the costumes of kings, chieftains, servants, soldiers, etc., but little has been said about the costume

1. Yasdanī, *Ib.*, Part II, Pl. XXV, p. 23.

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XLII (86).

3. *Ib.*, Pl. X, 12.

4. Yasdanī, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, p. 5, Pl. VII (6).

5. *Ib.*, Part I, p. 41. Pl. XXXIV, 1.

6. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, XLII, 5 ; also XXXVII, 49.

7. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XII (14).



of the common people. It is quite reasonable to assume that the costume of the men on the street was quite simple, consisting of 'dhoti', 'dupaṭṭā' and turban, as today. The common crowd is shown in one of the paintings of Ajanṭā depicting the Viśvantara Jātaka in Cave XVII.<sup>1</sup> In this scene three types of the dress of the common people can be distinguished : ( a ) a short 'dhoti' with the 'chādar' covering the whole body ( Fig. 95 ) ; ( b ) a full 'dhoti' with a striped 'kamarband' embroidered at the upper end, centre and sides ( Fig. 96 ) and ( c ) a short loin-cloth and a sash passed transversely on the chest ( Fig. 97 ). The shop-keeper saluting Viśvantara wears a short cloth over the loin-cloth suspended at the waist with a chain belt ( Fig. 98 ). Another shop-keeper pouring oil from a ladle wears shorts ( Fig. 99 ).

#### Dress of the Brāhmaṇas :

The Brāhmaṇas usually wear a short 'dhoti' and 'dupaṭṭā' ( Fig. 100 ).<sup>2</sup> In Cave I a Brāhmaṇa is shown wearing a flapped cap ( kaṇṭhapa ).<sup>3</sup> Another Brāhmaṇa holding an umbrella wears his striped 'dupaṭṭā' transversely on the chest ( Fig. 101 ).<sup>4</sup>

#### Costumes of the Court Jesters :

As is well known from Sanskrit dramas the 'Vidūṣakas' or court jesters usually accompanied the kings in ancient India to please them with witty remarks and tomfoolery. In Cave I<sup>5</sup> the jester making love to a woman wears a full sleeved tunic and the 'paṭkā' with its both ends united. In Cave II<sup>6</sup> he wears 'dhoti' and 'dupaṭṭā'. At another place in the same cave<sup>7</sup> the darkish figure of the jester wears a very long tunic decorated with a star pattern and held at the waist with a girdle. He also wears a lower garment, which may either be a 'dhoti' or trousers ; they are visible on or below his knees. The feet are covered with striped boots

1. *Ib.*, Pl. XXXIX, 48. Cave XVII.

2. *Ib.*, Pl. XXXIX.

3. Yendani, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, Pl. XXXV.

4. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XIII, 15. Cave I.

5. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XI, 30.

6. Yendani, *Loc. cit.*, Part II, Pl. XI, 3.

7. *Ib.*, Pl. XXIV, p. 94.



(Fig. 102). In another place<sup>1</sup> the jester wears a shirt and 'dupattā' passed round his back and shoulders, both falling short to cover his unshapely belly. Sometimes the jesters are shown playing with one another or enjoying music. In Cave I (Copy in the Prince of Wales Museum; Fig. 103) a couple of jesters are shown. The one on the left wears a domed cap decorated with a sprig, and a 'dhoti'. He has put his sash round the neck of his companion and is pulling it. The second jester on whom the joke is being practised wears a skull cap and 'dhoti'. Dr. Agrawala in a very informative article<sup>2</sup> tells us that in the time of Bānabhaṭṭa at festival occasions people practised jokes upon old chamberlains by tying their silken upper garments round the neck of the chamberlains and dragging them on. This practice is illustrated by a terracotta panel of the Gupta period in the Mathurā Museum in which a woman is shown dragging a jester by the scarf put round his neck.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Agrawala quotes another passage from 'Nāgānanda', a Sanskrit drama of the 7th century, in which a 'ceta' pulls a scarf thrown round the neck of the jester who wants to run away. Perhaps our scene from Ajanta illustrates the 'ceta' and jester. Originally, as Dr. Agrawala suggests, the idea might have developed from the Pāli 'celukkhepa', i. e. the waving of the upper garment as a token of joy; the upper cloth was taken off the shoulders for this purpose and waved. A representation of 'celukkhepa' occurs in the reliefs of Bharhut.

This method of cracking a joke is also to be found in the Kuṣāṇa sculptures of Mathurā. On a pillar depicting the story of Nanda and Sundarī in the Mathurā Museum a woman drags a jester by his scarf.

At another place in Cave I a jester wearing a full 'dhoti' and tunic plays on a 'vinā'. His female companion who wears a domed cap decorated with a sprig plays the cymbals (Fig. 104).

#### Snake-charmer's Costume :

In Cave I a snake-charmer is represented wearing a short 'dhoti' decorated with vertical blue bands and horizontal red stripes. A 'dupattā' tied at the chest is of the same design (Fig. 105).

1. *Ib.*, XXXV, p. 23.

2. 'A Palaen scene on a Terracotta panel from Mathurā', *JIBOA.*, 1942, pp. 60-74.

3. *Ib.*, p. 73.

4. Yasuōi, *Ib.* Pl. X, B.





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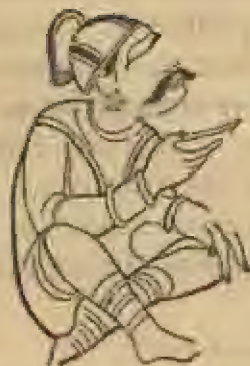
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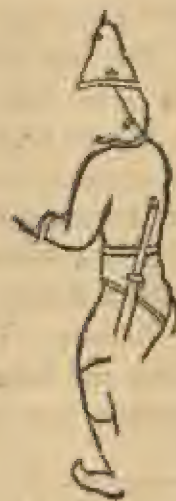
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### Costumes of Foreigners :

In the Gupta period cultural relations between India and the other countries of Asia specially China and Iran expanded to a great extent. A visible proof of this is given in the Ajanṭā paintings in which Iranians of the Sasanian period appear several times. It is difficult to say in the present state of our knowledge whether these figures represent indigenous Iranians or whether they represent the members of the Iranian speaking world of Tajikistan and the Pamirs whose Buddhist leanings and consequent pilgrimages to India are well known. The contact between the colonial Indian civilization of Central Asia which had imbibed the cultural heritage of India and was greatly influenced by the age old culture of China can be studied in the paintings of Ajanṭā and the frescoes and banner paintings from the ruins and caves of Central Asia. We are not concerned here with the journey of Indian motifs from Ajanṭā to Central Asia and the infiltration of certain Chinese motifs to India through the pilgrim travellers and other cultural and military contacts. The problem which concerns us in this article is the visible influence of Central Asiatic costume on Indian costume. That the influence was not negligible is apparent from the frequent use of caps, tunics and boots by people in the Ajanṭā paintings.

We have been stressing the point in our previous articles<sup>1</sup> that sewn garments were not unknown even in the Vedic age, though owing to the hot climatic conditions in India in the major part of the year the dress was very simple, consisting of 'dhoti', 'dupaṭṭā', and turban. In the succeeding periods and till the 3rd. century A.D. we have noticed the types of sewn garments and their use, which was confined to servants, foreigners, soldiers, hunters, etc. In the first century A.D. however, with the advent of the Kuṣānas the fashion of wearing sewn garments of Central Asiatic patterns seems to have made headway among all classes of Indians. This fact is amply testified by Gupta portrait coins, in which the kings are represented wearing Kuṣāna costume, sometimes in entirety and sometimes in combination with certain articles of indigenous



wear. In the Ajantā paintings, however, sewn garments are worn specially by servants, soldiers and the like, and occasionally by the princes and princesses, whose costumes are otherwise perfectly indigenous in type. Such sewn garments have been described in their proper places. In the following pages an attempt is made to describe the actual costume of the foreigners who appear in the Ajantā paintings.

In Cave XVII, in the painting of the 'Question of Sāriputra' a number of foreigners, apparently of Iranian descent, have congregated. On the left hand top of the picture an Iranian with folded hands rides an elephant. He wears a tunic with sleeves, cuffs and the front beautifully embroidered. Its embellishment consists of plain bands with the last band on each side being decorated with solid triangles facing outside. The decoration in front is made up of vertical criss-crossed panels lined with solid triangles ( Fig. 106 ). Another rider wears a full-sleeved tunic with a V-shaped neck decorated on either side with a claw-pattern. The arm-band is decorated with scales and leaves ( Fig. 107 ).<sup>2</sup> The soldiers of Iranian extraction go in tunics.<sup>3</sup> In the same scene the soldier on the left wears a tunic with a broad triangular collar. The armlets may be of fur. The second soldier wears a striped tunic with a round collar ( Fig. 108 ).

Then there is a fat attendant apparently of foreign origin with a humorous face. He wears a combination of cap and turban ; the latter is made of some striped material. His tunic has a V-shaped collar decorated with bands of dental pattern and meanders ; the embroidery on the arm-bands consists of solid triangles with circles encased in the centre between several bands. The tunic is secured to the waist with several folds of a 'kamarband' ( Fig. 109 ).

A foreigner depicted in Cave II<sup>4</sup> ( Fig. 110 ), apparently an Iranian, wears a skull-cap with streamers fluttering behind. The coat and trousers are tight and he wears hose marked with blue stripes. A scarf

1. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXII ( 24 ).

2. *Ib.*

3. *Ib.*

4. Yashwanth, *Loc. cit.*, Part II, Pl. XI, no p. 2.



appears to be tied round the neck, for its borders are seen fluttering at the back. In another place in Cave II<sup>1</sup> the material of the lower garment which the foreigner wears has a striped design in which the figures of ducks are interwoven.

The Costume of the Foreigners probably Syrians in the so-called Persian Embassy Scene at Ajaṇṭā :

The most interesting type of foreign costume is however found in the so-called representation of a court scene in Cave I which was formerly identified as representing a Persian embassy. There has been much controversy among scholars in the identification of this scene. One group recognised in the scene the embassy of the Persian king Khusrau to the Cālukyan Rāja Pulakeśin in the beginning of the 7th. century ; the other group saw very little chance in the Buddhist paintings of Ajaṇṭā of the representation of a purely secular scene, and therefore suggested that it was some unknown Jātaka scene. Both were however agreed about the distinctive foreign type of the people giving presents and their costume. The view that it is a Jātaka scene seems to be probable. A similar scene is sculptured at Amarāvati and has been identified by C. Sivaramamurti<sup>2</sup> as the 'Presents of King Bandhuma' (Introduction to the Vessantara Jātaka). In this scene the king is seated on the throne attended by two female 'chaurī'-bearers and a fan-bearer standing behind him. On the left is seated the royal consort on a 'moṣṭhā' attended by two 'chaurī' bearers and other maid-servants. In the foreground are four men dressed in tunics, trousers, 'kamarband' and full boots, kneeling on the floor and offering presents to the king. On the right is a concourse of high dignitaries of state in which the figure of the leader of the delegation attired in a tunic and turban is offering a pearl necklace to the king. At the door a horse and an elephant are seen. Another foreigner wearing a very long tunic stands at the door and seems to be a member of the group of foreigners. At Ajaṇṭā, the so-called scene of the Persian embassy is almost a duplicate of this scene. A party

1. Yashani, *Ib.*, Part II, Pl. XX, p. 19.

2. 'Amarāvati Sculptures in the Madras Museum', Pl. XXV, 6 ; pp. 224-25.



of foreigners is seen at the gate two of whom have entered the hall with presents. The court is full of dignitaries and three foreigners are among them. The Rāja in the centre is seated at ease on the throne; behind him stand fan and fly whisk bearers and there are other attendants on the left side.<sup>1</sup> The similarity between the Amarāvati and Ajañṭā scenes is so close that very little doubt is left that both the scenes represent the same episode.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the setting of these two scenes might have been borrowed from contemporary court scenes at which at times foreign embassies and merchants presented themselves to deliver gifts.

In the court scene at Ajañṭā<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 111) the foreigner in front is presenting a pearl ornament to the Rāja. He is described by Yazdani as wearing a peaked cap of striped silk or broad-cloth, and his long coat (qaba) is of the same material. Judging from the photographic reproduction however, he seems to be wearing two distinctive garments,—a long striped shirt and a coat whose V-shaped neck is distinctly visible. Near the right hand of the figure are two ribbons which possibly served as fasteners of the coat. There is also a belt. Below the waist the figure is represented as white with no trace of stripes; the possibility is that this white surface represents trousers. That the foreigners wear two garments—a shirt and coat—is quite clear from the figure of the foreigner in the middle; he wears a 'qaba' of green cloth which is open at the neck; through the opening one clearly sees the stripes of the undergarment. The coat reaches to the knees where the end is slit. In this slit the trousers are seen which cover the knees and reach down.—The peaked cap has a boss at the top. The coat is held tight with a belt. The costume of the third foreigner carrying a tray of ornaments is of no special interest. On the right two

1. Yazdani, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, pp. 46-48.

2. The following is the story of King Bandhuma's daughters from 'Jātaka', Vol. VI, p. 247. In the time of the Buddha Vipassī a certain king sent presents to King Bandhuma, the ruler of Bandhumatī. The presents consisted of a costly golden wreath and precious sandalwood. The king presented the sandalwood to the elder daughter and the golden wreath to the younger who with the consent of the king presented their gifts to Vipassī. The elder asked the boon to be born as the mother of a Buddha in a future life, and the younger one asked that in a future life she should be born with a golden wreath on her neck which was to remain till the time she attained sainthood. Their wishes were fulfilled.

3. Yazdani, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, pp. 46-47.



foreigners are entering the gate. The man in front wears the usual peaked cap, a 'qaba' reaching the ankles, and trousers and boots with the tip curved in. He wears moreover two belts through which a sword is suspended.

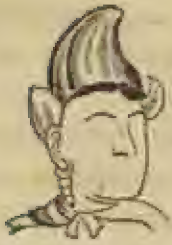
Who were these people? According to those upholding the Iranian embassy theory they should be Iranians. Yazdani is more inclined towards their Turkish origin.<sup>1</sup> The physical traits of these foreigner—a straight bold nose, sharply defined features and a spare pointed beard—are however absent in the foreigners of Central Asiatic or Iranian origin depicted many times at Ajanta. Their somewhat stocky appearance, thickly grown hair and the costumes made of thick woollen materials all go against an identification with the people represented as the so-called Persian embassy scene. Their sharp features probably recall their Semitic origin. They may be hastily dubbed as Arabs whose trade connections with western India from very early times are well known, but on mature consideration this is not possible as the Arab costume so far as we know it from the coins and other sources was a loose shirt and a scarf tied round the head, but they never wore a conical cap of the type above-mentioned. A possible clue for an identification is given by the costumes of Conon and his family in a painting at Dura Europus, a Macedonian colony on the right bank of the middle Euphrates between Antioch and Seleucia which was founded by a general of Seleucus about 280 B.C and later on was under the rule of the Romans, Parthians and Persians.<sup>2</sup> The typical costume of Conon and the members of his family is a peaked cap and a long full-sleeved shirt and shoes. Conon has a goatee beard and sharp Semitic features. The costume here is called by Rostovtzeff<sup>3</sup> a mixed Greco-Syrian dress (perhaps with some Iranian elements). The costume of the foreigners in the so-called Persian embassy scene is very similar to the costume of Conon and his family at Dura Europus. The date of the Dura Europus paintings however is the first Century A.D. while that of Ajanta, Cave I is the beginning of the 7th. Century—and owing to this wide gap one may hesitate to hazard conclusions. But in oriental

1. *Ib.*, Part I, p. 47.

2. 'Proceedings of the British Academy', Vol. XIX, p. 219.

3. 'The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World', Vol. II, Pl. XCVII, Oxford, 1941.





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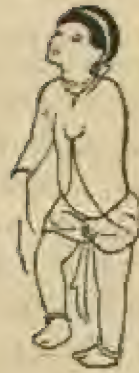
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countries the costumes do not undergo revolutionary changes in five hundred years. It is therefore possible that the foreigners represented in the so-called Persian embassy scene at Ajaṇṭā were Syrian or Mesopotamian merchants.

The foreign caps have been dealt with in connection with the costumes. Some interesting types are however specially described<sup>1</sup> here namely a conical cap with tilted tip and the flaps raised upwards ( Fig. 112 ), a helmet with crenellated edge, decorated at the top with recessed bosses ( Fig. 113 ) and a conical cap with a plume ( Fig. 114 ).

#### Costumes of Children :

In Ajaṇṭā there are representations of children serving on the princes and princesses, and others and also in various playful attitudes.

In the famous representation of the Mother and Child in Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> the child wears a striped 'dhoti' and a 'channavīra'; his hair is held in position by ribbons ( Fig. 115 ). At another place in Cave XVII<sup>3</sup> the child wears a short 'dhoti' with 'paṭkā'; his hair is tied with a ribbon ( Fig. 116 ). Elsewhere in Cave XVII<sup>4</sup> the boy servant holding the spittoon wears shorts and tunic : his hair is held together with a ribbon ( Fig. 117 ). A child in Cave I<sup>5</sup> wears tight shorts, full boots and a skull-cap with flower decorations ( Fig. 118 ) ; he is apparently swinging. In another variation<sup>6</sup> a 'channavīra' and belt are added to the costume ( Fig. 119 ).

The cap seems to have been favourite with children. In Cave XL<sup>7</sup> one of the children is shown wearing a spiral-shaped cap. They also wore boots, as shown above. In Cave I<sup>8</sup> the child wears a pair of socks or long boots, the upper ends of which are marked with a dark line.

#### Costume of the Queens and other Exalted Ladies on Gupta Coins :

The Goddess Lakṣmī seated on the couch on the obverse of the

1. The drawings have been taken from Griffiths' 'Ajanta', Part I.

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. VI, 7.

4. *Ib.* Pl. III, 4.

6. *Ib.*

8. Yardani, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, Pl. XXXIV, B. p. 41.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. V, 6.

5. Copy in the Prince of Wales Museum.

7. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXXVII.



standard type coins of Samudragupta<sup>1</sup> wears a 'sārī' down to the ankles. Her body is draped in a full-sleeved tunic reaching the knees. Below the breasts a waist-band is tied with its loop visible on the left side of the figure. Her shoulders are covered with a 'chādar' ( Fig. 120 ). In the Candragupta I and Kumāradevi type the queen is dressed in the manner of Lakṣmī described above.<sup>2</sup> In the Archer type<sup>3</sup> Lakṣmī wears a 'dhotī' and a half-sleeved jacket covering the breasts ( Fig. 121 ).—In the stone image of Śiva-Pārvaṭī from Kosam dated in the Gupta year 139=458-9 A.D.<sup>4</sup> the headdress of Pārvaṭī seems to be made of a basket work pattern with a boss on each side from which hang tassels ( Fig. 122 ).

At Ajaṇṭā, in keeping with the costume of kings, the queens and ladies of position wear a striped 'dhotī' and 'ghaghri' with a profusion of ornaments. This costume of the Rānīs contradicts what we learn about it from the coins and contemporary literature. Probably the painters have given a local touch to the costume of the kings and queens.

In Ajaṇṭā<sup>5</sup> the king's consort usually wears a 'sārī' or 'ghaghri' reaching the ankles and decorated with horizontal red and yellow stripes on white ground. Some of the registers are also chequered ( Fig. 123 ). At another place the 'sārī'<sup>6</sup> is decorated with purple and green stripes. The princess looking at the mirror<sup>7</sup> wears a diaphanous 'sārī' held to the waist with a three-stranded girdle and the waist-band with the ends dangling decorated with gold ( Fig. 124 ). One of her attendants on the right wears a simple loin-cloth with a belt and a waistband whose both ends hang down the back; the 'caurī'-bearer on the left also wears a loin-cloth whose ruffles are very charming; she wears no belt but a waist-band which is looped behind. In another place<sup>8</sup> the Rānī wears a striped 'ghaghri' and what appears to be a turban or cap ( Fig. 125 ).

Sometimes at Ajaṇṭā the princesses and the ladies in high position are dressed in sewn garments as well. In one of the scenes in Cave I<sup>9</sup> the

1. Allan, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. I, 1-3.

2. Allan, *Ib.*, Pl. VII, 1.

3. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. I, 1. Cave XVII.

4. *Ib.*, Pl. V, 6; Cave XVII.

5. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXVII, 29. Cave XVII.

6. Yardani, *Loc. cit.*, I, Pl. XVII, p. 31.

7. Allan, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. III, 2.

8. A.S.I. 1213-14, Pl. LXX (6).

9. *Ib.*, Pl. III, 4.





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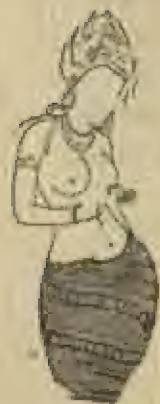
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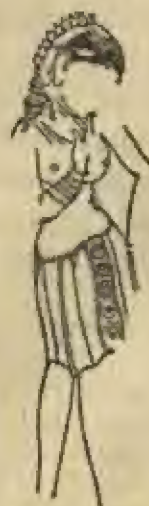
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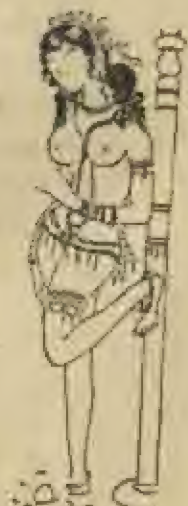
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Rānī wears a bodice of transparent gauze, the fine texture of which bears white dots and lines. In the famous Padmapāṇi panel in Cave I<sup>1</sup> the princess to the left of the Bodhisattva is clad in a bodice of fine gauze<sup>2</sup> and a short skirt with birds and ladder pattern in horizontal registers; the middle register is decorated with a wavy pattern. Her head is covered with an elaborate headdress (Fig. 126). In another place<sup>3</sup> the young Rānī wears a tunic of some pale material with a lozenge pattern worked on the border in red (Fig. 127). Another queen in Cave I<sup>4</sup> seated on a stool, wears a striped 'ghaghri' and a breast-band of very thin material; the back is covered with what appears to be a scarf (Fig. 128). In Cave I<sup>5</sup> on the extreme right side, between the pillars, stands a woman wearing a skirt made of striped silk whose most interesting part is the border which falls exactly in the centre of the skirt. The pattern consists of a chain of rosettes which might have been woven or embroidered (Fig. 129). In Cave II<sup>6</sup> a princess wears a tight bodice of thin material and a close-fitting knee-length garment (Fig. 130).

#### Costumes of the Serving maids :

It is not however the costumes of the ladies of high rank at Ajaṇṭā that shows many varieties, for, as we know, the ladies of position except for their ornaments were dressed simply. Strange as it may appear it is in the costumes of serving maids that we get glimpses of the smart costumes of the period.

Ordinarily the maid-servants and attendants are dressed in a short 'sāri', loose 'kamarband' with the ends dangling at the back and belt.<sup>7</sup> But at Ajaṇṭā the female attendants also are seen going in tunics and 'ghaghri's' which are very often embroidered. The different types of sewn garments worn by these attendants and the materials used for making them as far as is evident from Ajaṇṭā are described below.

1. *Ib.*, Pl. XXIV; Vol. I, p. 23. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XI, 13.

2. This is not apparent in the reproduction but visible in the original fresco as observed by Yashani. *Ib.*

3. *Ib.*, Part I, Pl. VI, B.

4. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XIV, 16.

5. *Ib.*, Pl. XV, 17.

6. Yashani, *Loc. cit.*, Part II, Pl. XXI, p. 20.

7. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. V, E. Cave XVII.



Maid-servants often wear a white full-sleeved tunic reaching the knees ( Fig. 131 ).<sup>1</sup> Female attendants often wear double jackets.<sup>2</sup> In Cave I a woman attendant is shown listening with rapt attention to the sermon of the Buddha. She wears a jacket over the tunic. The jacket seems to be made of purplish 'bāndhaṇi' cloth and is open in front, while the green tunic has full sleeves and is closed in front ( Fig. 132 ). Another maid-servant seated within the room where the king is engaged in conversing with his wife wears a quarter-sleeved green bodice marked with dots; its frontage is prolonged to reach the knees; another red and tie-dyed garment is worn over it and fastened at the back. Her head is covered with a scarf ( Fig. 133 ). A 'cauri'-bearer wears a low-necked frock-like garment made of striped silk ( Fig. 134 ).<sup>3</sup> In another place<sup>4</sup> a 'cauri'-bearer walking in front of the Rāja's horse in a procession wears a full-sleeved tunic in which the figures of ducks are woven or printed ( Fig. 135 ). In the Padmapāṇi scene<sup>5</sup> the 'cauri'-bearer standing behind the Bodhisattva and who seems to be of foreign extraction, is dressed in a long tunic and a peculiar headgear with four upturned embroidered flaps and a conical top in the middle ( Fig. 136 ). 'Cauri'-bearers also wore the 'sārī'. In Cave I<sup>6</sup> below the throne of the Rāja stands a 'cauri'-bearer wearing a 'sārī', the upper part of which she has rolled and thrown across her shoulder in the form of a scarf. Another 'cauri'-bearer in Cave XVII<sup>7</sup> wears a scarf round the neck, striped shorts and a scarf with its ends hanging down ( Fig. 137 ). At Ajanta,<sup>8</sup> in the 'Court of the King of Benares' the 'cauri'-bearer ( Fig. 138 ) standing behind the king wears a tall cap decorated with what appears to be a flower at the top. In the same scene on the right behind the minister stands another 'cauri'-bearer with a conical cap; a very thin scarf is thrown round the chest ( Fig. 139 ).

1. Yasdani, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, Pl. VI ( b ).

2. Yasdani, Part I, Pl. XIV. Cave I.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. XVII. Cave I.

4. Yasdani, *Ib.*, Pl. XVII. Cave I.

5. *Ib.*, XVII. Cave I.

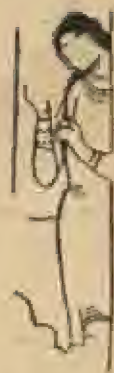
6. *Ib.*, Pl. XXIV. Cave I.

7. Yasdani, *Ib.*, I, Pl. XXXVIII.

8. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. IX, 11.

9. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXV, 97.





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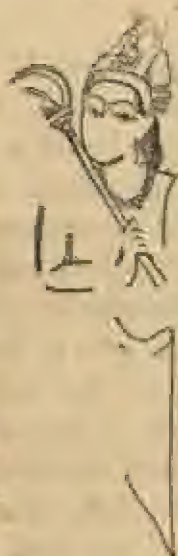
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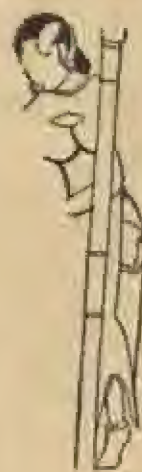
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The above description of the costume of the 'cauri'-bearers does not mean that this sort of costume was entirely confined to a particular class of servant girls. It was common among all classes of servants and there is every reason to believe that it must have been the costume of the middle-class women in the Gupta period. The following description should give an adequate idea of the varieties of the women's costume specially attached to the palace.

In the 'Campeya Jātaka' a lady in the background is dressed in a long tunic. The tunic seems to have been made of a thin fabric decorated with diagonally assorted small flowers. The pattern on her scarf cannot be traced in the reproduction but it is distinct in the original.<sup>2</sup>

Female Attendants probably Persians :

In one of the Bacchanalian scenes in Ajantā, Cave I,<sup>3</sup> on the right stands an attendant serving wine to the chief in the centre. She wears a round cap of red material ( broad-cloth or velvet ) with a white border which is either of fur or some woollen material. A white plum springs from the top of the cap. Her upper garment consists of a long tight full-sleeved pink tunic with embroidered collar, shoulders and cuffs. The lower garment is a long white skirt with a frilled border of pale blue colour ( Fig. 140 ). The costume of the attendant on the left is practically the same with certain differences only. Attached to the red cap is a long flowing veil falling on the back, one end of which is raised and tucked up in the 'kamarband'. The shoulders, cuffs and the collar seem to be trimmed with white fur. The long skirt border consists of frills in light green and blue ( Fig. 141 ). The woman with her lord whom these attendants are plying with wine is dressed in a tunic in no way different in make from those of the servants.

In Cave XVII<sup>4</sup> an attendant in the centre who by her costume appears to be of foreign extraction wears a tunic with rosette decoration and

1. Yardani, *Ib.*, I, Pl. XXXIV, B, Cave II.

2. Yardani, *Ib.*, p. 41, fn. 1.

3. Yardani, I, Pl. XXXIX, A.

4. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXVIII, B.





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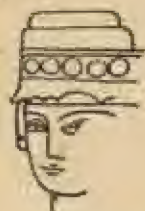
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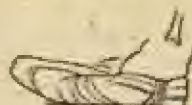
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156B



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a dome-shaped cap with upturned brim and a knob at the top. In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> one of the maids wears a tunic and a scarf with its ends knotted in front (Fig. 142). Another maid in the same scene wears a cap with two straps hanging on the sides (Fig. 143).

**Maid Servants of Foreign Extraction, etc. :**

In Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> a maid servant apparently of foreign extraction wears a moss-green half-sleeved jacket closely fitting at the waist and open at the sides and front. The material from which it is made is embroidered with diagonally assorted stars. Her skirt is probably made of blue striped silk. Her helmet-like cap has a beaded rim (Fig. 144).

In Cave II at Ajantā<sup>3</sup> a woman is shown wearing a tight bodice of blue silk, the short sleeves edged with pearl strings. In the Deccan it is still a fashion among ladies to attach strings of gold beads to the short sleeves of their 'colis.'<sup>4</sup>

In Cave II<sup>5</sup> the dress of an attendant is made of three pieces,—a tight bodice, over which is a tunic of pleasing design, slit for almost the entire length at the sides to give freedom of movement and a skirt or 'sārī'<sup>6</sup> tight enough to indicate the roundnesses of the figure (Fig. 145). A similar apron-like tunic appears elsewhere in Cave II<sup>7</sup> where this garment is made of a material with black stars worked on white ground. The sides of the body and back are exposed to view.

In Cave XVI<sup>1</sup> the fan-bearer is represented as wearing a short 'ghaghri'<sup>2</sup> and breast-band (Fig. 146). Another maid seated by the side of the Dying Princess wears a half-sleeved tight jacket.

**Female Attendants engaged in preparing Medicine :**

In Cave XVI on the top right a seated attendant wears a half-

1. Mukul Dey, 'My Pilgrimages to Ajanta and Bagh', Plate facing p. 140.

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. III, 4.

3. Yashwanth, *Ib.*, Part II, Pl. VII a.

4. *Ib.*, Part II, p. 4.

5. *Ib.*, Part II, Pl. XVII a.

6. Yashwanth, *Ib.*, Part II, Pl. XXV.

7. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXXV, 38.



sleeved tunic fitting the body and reaching the knee (Fig. 147)<sup>1</sup>. The second one preparing medicine wears a half-sleeved tunic covering the chest and perhaps extending down below ; the lower part of the back seems to be bare (Fig. 148).

#### A Woman in a Garden :

In Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> a woman walking in the garden wears a 'ghaghri' of transparent material and a sash transversely on the chest (Fig. 149).

#### Women Attendants of the Buddha :

In Cave XVII<sup>3</sup> a woman attending on the Buddha wears a striped sleeve-less tunic without shoulders and a tall hexagonal cap studded with jewels (Fig. 150). Another attendant in the same scene wears a rectangular cap, while a third one wears a tiered cap (Fig. 151). A woman apparently belonging to the middle class<sup>4</sup> seated on the floor with her back turned wears a sleeveless low-necked bodice the upper part of which is green, yellow and blue ; the lower part seems to be striped (Fig. 152).

#### Costume of Women Riding Elephants :

At Bagh<sup>5</sup> women riding elephants are depicted. The driver of the elephant in the background wears golden striped shorts. In the group of three women the one seated behind the driver wears a short-sleeved 'coli' made of golden brocade with the cuffs decorated with greenish borders. The front part of the bodice covers the breasts and the stomach, and continuing, ends on the thighs. The lower edge is cut in semi-circular style with pointed ends. She also wears a striped 'ghaghri'. The apron-like garment we have already come across in Ajantā. The bodice of the third woman is similar in cut to that of the first woman though the bottom edge does not seem to be cut in semi-circles but is left plain. The cloth seems to be yellow dotted with blue (Fig. 153).

1. Mukul Dey, *Loc. cit.*

2. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, XXXV, 88.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. XLII, 56.

4. Yashwanth, *Loc. cit.* Part I, Pl. XI.

5. Marshall & Others, 'The Bagh Caves', Pl. G, Details Pl. 1.



### Headdresses of the Women at Ajantā :

At Ajantā generally the women go with their heads uncovered, but sometimes the women of higher social status wear tiaras. Some attendants also wear caps. At times however the artists indulged in representing some local headdresses. In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> a woman otherwise without much clothing wears an embroidered scarf covering her hair (Fig. 154). In Cave II<sup>2</sup> a woman is represented wearing a striped and embroidered cap. The ribbon-like scrolls seen on her shoulders may be the ornamented borders of the scarf. Headgear of this type is to be seen frequently at Ajantā and Ellora (Fig. 155).

### The Dress of an Aboriginal Woman :

The aboriginal women wear a leaf skirt, which is represented in Cave XVII at Ajantā<sup>3</sup>. The make-up of this skirt is extremely simple, the green twigs being suspended in front and behind from the three-stranded girdle made of beads (Fig. 61, 62).

### Costume of the Peasant Women :

The majority of the women belonging to the cultivator class however wore short 'sāris'. In Cave II<sup>4</sup> the women engaged in their toilet wear short striped 'dhotis' with one end tucked in behind. The hair is covered with a scarf or bound with a ribbon (Fig. 156).

### Costumes of Female Musicians and Dancers :

On a lintel piece excavated from Pawāya, the ancient Padmāvati, Gwalior State, is depicted a dancing scene (Fig. 157).<sup>5</sup> The relief may be dated as Pre-Gupta or Nāga and is interesting from the point of the history of the local costume of Bundelkhand. There are eight female musicians seated on stools surrounding the dancer in the middle. The latter wears a 'sāri' reaching the ankles with the pleated end tucked in behind—a local manner of wearing the 'sāri' still prevalent in Bundelkhand. Her breasts are covered with a scarf knotted near the left shoulder. A very elaborate coiffure adorns her head. The musicians in the background wear the 'sāri' in the manner of the dancer but also a 'coli' tying in front.

1. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXXV.

2. Yashanti, *Loc. cit.*, Part II, Pls. XXXII, XXXIII b.

3. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. XXVII, 29.

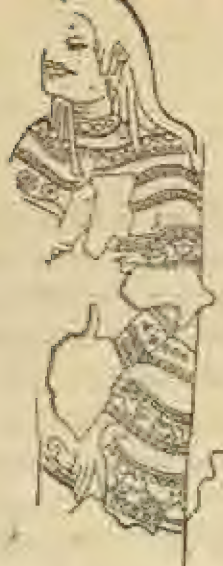
4. Copy in the Prince of Wales Museum.

5. 'The Annual Report of the Archaeological Department, Gwalior State for 1930-31', Pl. VIII.





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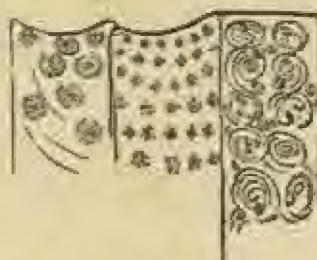
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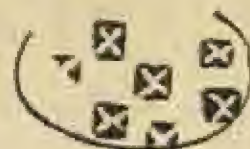
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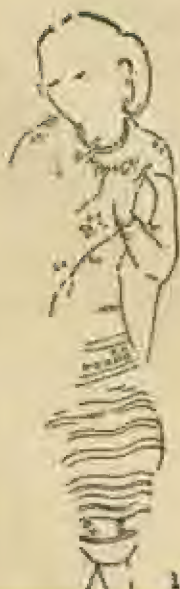
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In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> a group of female cymbal players is represented. They wear 'sāpīs' and elaborately tied waist-bands (Fig.158). Delicate scarves flutter behind. In Ajaṇṭā Cave P one of the musicians wears a long tunic of blue striped silk in which spirals and the figures of oxen and ducks appear in the texture of the silk (Fig.159). The patterns are in horizontal registers; the stripes flanked with narrow borders are decorated with circles. Another dancing girl in the same group wears a tunic made of tie-dyed cloth.

In the 'Mahājanaka Jātaka' in Cave P the dancer wears a long dark brown full-sleeved tunic decorated with circles. Over this tunic there is an yellow apron-like garment. For freedom of movement its sides have been so cut that its lower ends hang loose (Fig.160).<sup>2</sup> Her skirt is long and is marked with purple, green and yellow stripes, on which appear lozenge patterns in white. The drummer has her breasts covered with a striped breast-band tied at the back with its ends hanging down. She wears shorts or a 'ghaghri' to the middle of which is attached a broad decorative band filled with a lozenge and circle motif (Fig.161).

At Bāgh<sup>3</sup> in one scene two groups of female musicians are depicted. The left hand group is comprised of seven women standing around an eighth figure, a dancer (Fig.162). The costume of the dancer is made up of a long-sleeved greenish yellow tunic decorated with a white dot-in-circle motif reaching to the knees. The tunic has pointed ends, and the cuffs, the lower edges and the sides of the pointed ends are decorated with what appears to be lace. The wide collar cut in a meandering shape seems to have been added separately perhaps to enhance the elegance of the dancing costume. The trousers are decorated with greenish yellow stripes which match very well with the tunic. The loose 'kamarband' with blue and white stripes also blends perfectly with the colour scheme of the costume.

1. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Cave XVII, No. 57.

2. Yashanti, *Loc. cit.*, Part I, Pl. X a. Cave I.

3. Yashanti, *Id.*, Pls. XII, XIII.

4. Compare the apron-like garment of the dancer depicted on one of the Gupta period lintels at Śāradīb; Bahol, 'Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sarvaith', Pl. XXVII. She wears a Bāri and a sari over her shoulders.

5. Marshall, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. D.



The head is covered with a golden scarf with thin blue stripes. The 'tipri' player (Fig. 163) standing next to the drummer has on her left shoulder a doubled up scarf with stripes in blue and gold. Another 'tipri' player (Fig. 164) standing next to her wears a 'ghaghri' with blue and greenish stripes. The ovaloid neck of her bodice is open. Among the three cymbal players on the right of the musicians the middle one wears a half-sleeved ultramarine bodice with an ovaloid opening at the neck. Its ends cover the breasts and are prolonged to the knees (Fig. 165). The 'ghaghri' has light greenish stripes and the white intervening spaces are relieved with hachures.

In the second group of dancers and musicians the seated dancer wears the same type of costume as the dancer in the previous group. The dull grey bodice of the musician standing behind him may indicate that it was made of silver brocade. Its apron-like cut can be compared with the bodice of a musician in the previous group.

There is yet another group of female musicians at Bāgh.<sup>1</sup> All the members of this party standing in the foreground wear bodices. The one in the centre wears a green one dotted with white. The dancer to her left wears a tiara and her knotted bun-like coiffure is covered with a white scarf. She wears a light blue tunic over which she seems to have worn an apron-like garment. The woman next to the dancer has a half-sleeved ultramarine bodice. The outstanding characteristics in the costumes of the women are summarised below :

#### Summary :

A. On the basis of the coins it may be said that the ladies of position wore 'sāris', full-sleeved tunics reaching down the knees, waist-bands and 'chādars.' Sometimes 'dhotis' suspended with elaborate zones and half-sleeved jackets were also worn.

B. At Ajaṇṭā, however, the ladies of position wear usually striped 'ghaghri's and 'sāris,' but at times they wear half-sleeved jackets or bodices of fine gauze.

C. The serving women at Ajaṇṭā often wear sewn garments consisting of full-sleeved or half-sleeved long tunics, 'colis,' breast-bands, jackets,

1. Marshall, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. C.



and apron-like garments. The maid-servants of foreign origin wear long tunics, frilled undergarments and caps.

#### Patterns on Textiles :

So far we have been dealing with the costumes and in that connection we have described the different patterns appearing on the materials out of which the clothes were fashioned ; but at Ajantā in the representations of pillows, curtains and cushions further light is thrown on the textile designs of the Gupta period about which unhappily in the absence of contemporary material we know very little.

In Cave XVII<sup>1</sup> a glimpse of two curtains is obtainable. One is of a dark green colour divided into panels by dotted lines with white flowers appearing on the surface. The second curtain bears ochre-coloured stripes with bluish flower petals appearing on the white ground ( Fig. 166 ).

In Cave XVII<sup>2</sup> the cushion on which the king is seated is made of striped material, the alternate bands bearing a chess pattern ( Fig. 167 ).

Some very interesting textile materials ( Fig. 168 ) are shown in Cave XVII as back curtains in the scene depicting the King of Benares honouring the Golden Goose.<sup>3</sup> Kāśī (Benares) has been a seat of the textile industry from very ancient times, and the appearance of typical Benares cloth in a scene connected with Benares need not cause surprise. In one textile piece diagonally assorted rosettes appear ( Fig. 168A ) ; in the second (168B) there are open flowers and the third bears chains of spirals ( Fig. 168C ).

In another palace scene in Cave I<sup>4</sup> the common textile patterns can be studied. The women wear skirts made of striped material. The queen's skirt made of a pale yellow stuff bears chocolate horizontal stripes on which are worked arrow-head-like designs which are perhaps conventional representations of birds ( Fig. 169 ). The material of the skirt of the woman on the extreme left is similar to that of the queen's skirt but the stripes are decorated with circles. The 'cauri'-bearer in the

1. Herringham, *Loc. cit.*, Pl. I, 1.

2. Herringham, *Ib.*, Pl. XXII, 24.

3. *Ib.*, Pl. XXV, 23.

4. *Ib.*, Pl. XIV (18).



background on the left wears a skirt made of pale green stuff beautifully decorated with chocolate stripes.

In a palace scene from Cave I<sup>1</sup> the cushions are made of a material bearing a four-petalled floral design ( 'caupatiā' ; Fig. 170 ).

In Cave I again<sup>2</sup> two patterns on pillows are seen. (1) The cushion used by Campeya is made of cloth in which are small stars worked in silk and gold or silver thread on a dull yellowish texture which itself is gold or silver cloth. The design on the cushion which his consort uses consists of stars or four-pointed flowers worked out on a dark background.

In Cave II<sup>3</sup> the cushion cloth bears a check pattern with stars at the corner.

### CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages we have covered the history of Indian costume roughly from the third century A. D. to the end of the seventh. The literary evidences, the accounts of the Chinese travellers and the archæological evidences of paintings and sculptures have all been utilised to show that the period under review is not only called the Golden age because of the great political achievements of rulers like Samudragupta, Candragupta and Śrī Harṣa, but also from the point of view of the development of Indian culture which manifests itself in the superb sculptures of the temples and the cave paintings. They are a veritable treasure-house of contemporary manners and customs, of the luxurious life which the kings and nobles led and of the refined costumes of the people which form the subject matter of our thesis.

The history of the costume in the period under review may be divided roughly under three sections : (1) pre-Gupta ; (2) Gupta and (3) post-Gupta, including the period of Śrī Harṣa and the Cālukyas of Deccan.

For the history of the costume of the first period our mainstay are the sculptures from Goli, Guntur district, in the Madras Presidency and stray sculptures from Pāwāya in Gwalior State. In the South, as far as the costume of the people is concerned, there was no big departure from the

1. Herringham, *ib.*, Pl. XXVIII, 37.

2. Yasland, *Leo. oit.*, Part I, p. 39, Pl. XXXIVa, 1.

3. *ib.*, Part II, Pl. XII, p. 10.



days of Amarāvati. In the sculpture from Pāwāya, however, certain local variations have been recorded. There is no fixed chronology of the Mathurā sculptures—nearly all the red stone sculptures being labelled Kuṣāṇa, though some may be of Gupta date. These sculptures, however, we have not taken into consideration because very few of them tell us anything new from what we already know about Indian costume in the Kuṣāṇa period.

In the Gupta period proper various sculptures, the paintings of Cave XVII at Ajanṭā, if we prefer to call them Gupta and not Vākātaka and most important of them all the coins of the Gupta emperors amply illustrate the costumes. In the Gupta sculptures there is a tendency towards conventionalisation and idealisation. The coins however are naturalistic in the treatment of the portraits of the kings, and even within their small size they show minute details of the costumes. As regards the literary sources there is the 'Amarakoṣa' and the works of Kālidāsa, though the latter does not throw much light on the subject of costumes. A third source however of inestimable value are certain Jain texts; the traditions of the Jain canon are much older than the Gupta period and its 'sūtra' portion may go as far back as the fourth century B. C. But the Jain canon according to the Jain traditions themselves was collected and re-edited from time to time, the latest edition being made in the fifth century by a council of monks invited by Devārdhi Kṣamāāramaṇa at Valabhī. The descriptive portions in the canon which, by the way, are all alike, by their overelaboration and pompous style remind us more of the style of Subandhu and Bāṇa than of the terse style of the authors of the Jain 'sūtras'. The late age of these passages is further supported by internal evidence. Many of them mention necklaces made of 'dīnāra', a coin introduced in the Kuṣāṇa period. The garments bearing geese patterns are also not mentioned in the literature of the pre-Gupta age. It seems that these descriptive portions were added in the fifth century while the canon was undergoing the third edition. The Jain canon as is well known has a vast commentarial literature, known technically as 'Niryukti', 'Bhāṣya', 'Cūrṇi' and 'Tīkā' the first three being in Prakrit and the last in Sanskrit. Unfortunately nothing is known about the date of the Bhāṣyas—the most important of them being the Bhāṣya on the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra'



by Jinadāsa Gaṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa. In the absence of dates one has to depend on internal evidence, and as far as the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra' is concerned there should be no hesitation in assigning it to the Gupta era if not earlier.

This is not the place to discuss the evidence about the date of a particular work but as we have utilised fully the materials on costumes, textile materials, shoes, etc., from the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra' Bhāṣya it will not be besides the point to give one or two proofs of its date. In a section ( vol. IV, 3891-92 ) certain coins are described as current in India and their rates of exchange are also given. From these couplets it is evident that there were coins of Dakṣiṇāpatha, Uttarāpatha, the Nelaka coins of Conjeevaram and the coins of Pāṭaliputra. Such political units could not exist later than the Gupta period, though they could also point to the age of the later Śātavāhanas. In the description of the costume of a nun one is faced with the well-clad type of women of the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods. Considering these points—and there are many more—there should not be any hesitation in assigning Jinadāsa Gaṇi to the Gupta period. But even if he existed after the Gupta period there is every likelihood that he has incorporated much of the material of the period, and hence is a trustworthy source for the social history of this period.

The materials on costume and textiles in the 'Amarakośa' are of a varied nature. Various classes of textiles manufactured from bark fibres, linen, silk, wool and goat's hair are defined. Various technical terms of cloth manufacture from the loom to the washing and finishing stages are given. It also contains various terms for garments sewn or otherwise. Names for sewn garments of the women, such as 'cola, caṇḍātaka', etc., are mentioned. Our knowledge of garments of the period is further augmented by occasional references to Kālidāsa; our knowledge of the various kinds of silks is increased by the 'Bṛhat-kalpa-sūtra' Bhāṣya which also tells of the various centres of cloth production, varieties of cloth materials, their prices and of various articles of costume both of laymen and monks and nuns. Its description of shoes is of great importance and for the first time in Indian literature we are told the Indian name for full boots worn by the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta kings as 'khapusā'.

It is evident from the coins and paintings that sewn garments were extensively used. This innovation may be directly attributed to the foreign influence of the Sakas and Hūṇas and the cultural and commercial inter-



course with the foreign lands. The imported female slaves clad in sewn garments made after the style of the countries from which they came perhaps also to a certain degree moulded the taste of the inmates of the harem as far as their costumes were concerned.

It is evident from the coins that the Gupta kings often wore tunics, trousers and high boots after the fashion of the Kuṣāṇa kings, and very often they are also represented wearing 'dhoti, dupattā', and turban in combination with tunics and 'kamarband'. It is also evident from the coins of Kumāragupta that a national costume was coming to the forefront in the later part of the Gupta period. The women as a rule are represented in 'sāṛī', bodice, tunic and 'chādar'.

Ample material for the study of the costume of the post-Gupta period is supplied in the works of Bāṇabhaṭṭa. Here we are not only given scrappy references to costumes but are told how they were worn and of what materials they were made. Bāṇa's observant eyes note details of the costumes of the kings, queens, attendants, messengers, chamberlains or even monks escaped, and the truthfulness of his description can be checked with the help of the Ajantā paintings.

Further materials for the history of Indian costume in this period are supplied by the Chinese travellers Yuan-chwang and I-tsing. Yuan-chwang's description of Indian costume is short and rather conventional, but I-tsing has given a detailed description of the costumes of the monks and nuns belonging to the different orders of Buddhism and he has also made pertinent observations on the costumes of the Indians in general. It is evident from his observations that the skirt was generally used by women and the common dress of the Indians was a 'dhoti' and 'dupattā', though in Kashmir and other colder regions sewn woollen garments were used.

All the informations about Indian costume pale into insignificance when we approach the paintings of Ajantā which show us in detail the costumes of the people of all classes. It is significant that commonly the kings at Ajantā wear 'dhotis' and highly ornamented headdresses but sewn garments were not tabooed. The nobles and princes imitated the king. The chamberlain and at times the ministers wear long tunics. The soldiers wear either a 'dhoti' or are clad in tunics, trousers, head scarves and high boots. The jesters and royal attendants wear tunics and boots



or purely Indian costume. The queens and the women of higher social status wear light garments consisting of 'sāpīs', skirts and scarves, though at times they also wear tunics with half sleeves or full. It is however in the costumes of the female attendants that a great variety may be seen. One section of the female attendants wears tunics and caps of definitely foreign origin and the other section is clad in purely Indian costume. The dancing girls are also shown wearing tunics, sometimes in combination with an apron-like garment and trousers.

We have referred to the foreign intercourse in this period. This is amply supported by the various foreign types appearing at Ajantā. One type wears a tunic with a V-shaped opening at the neck, lightly embroidered at the cuffs, collar and arms, and dome-shaped caps. Their beards, bushy eyebrows and straight features recall the features of Iranians, and they may be Iranians or Central Asians. In the famous so-called Persian embassy scene in Cave I the foreigners are of different stock and in our opinion may be Syrians. In the Khusrau and Shīrīn scene the elaborate dress of Iranian women wearing frilled tunics and domed caps may be seen.

The paintings of Ajantā also depict various textile patterns. They show that tie-dyed materials were greatly in demand and that stripes, ladders and chequers were common patterns. In one painting we see certain pieces which might have been of Benares manufacture.

In conclusion we have utilised whatever material was available both from literature and art for reconstructing a truthful picture of the costumes in one of the most glorious periods of Indian history. It dispels the prejudice and common notion that there can not be any history of Indian costume prior to the Mughal period as the Indians prior to this wore only simple unsewn garments without any aesthetic value whatsoever. The Indians however knew sewn garments at least fifteen hundred years before the advent of the Mughals, but mere aesthetic considerations did not move them to discard the more convenient and hygienic 'dhoti' and scarf in favour of tight tunics, trousers and caps,—most uncomfortable articles of costume where the sun registers a temperature of 120 degrees in summer. But the simplicity of two sheets making up the costume of the majority of the ancient Indians lent itself to artistic modes of wearing them. All these facts have been recorded in the body of this article.



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